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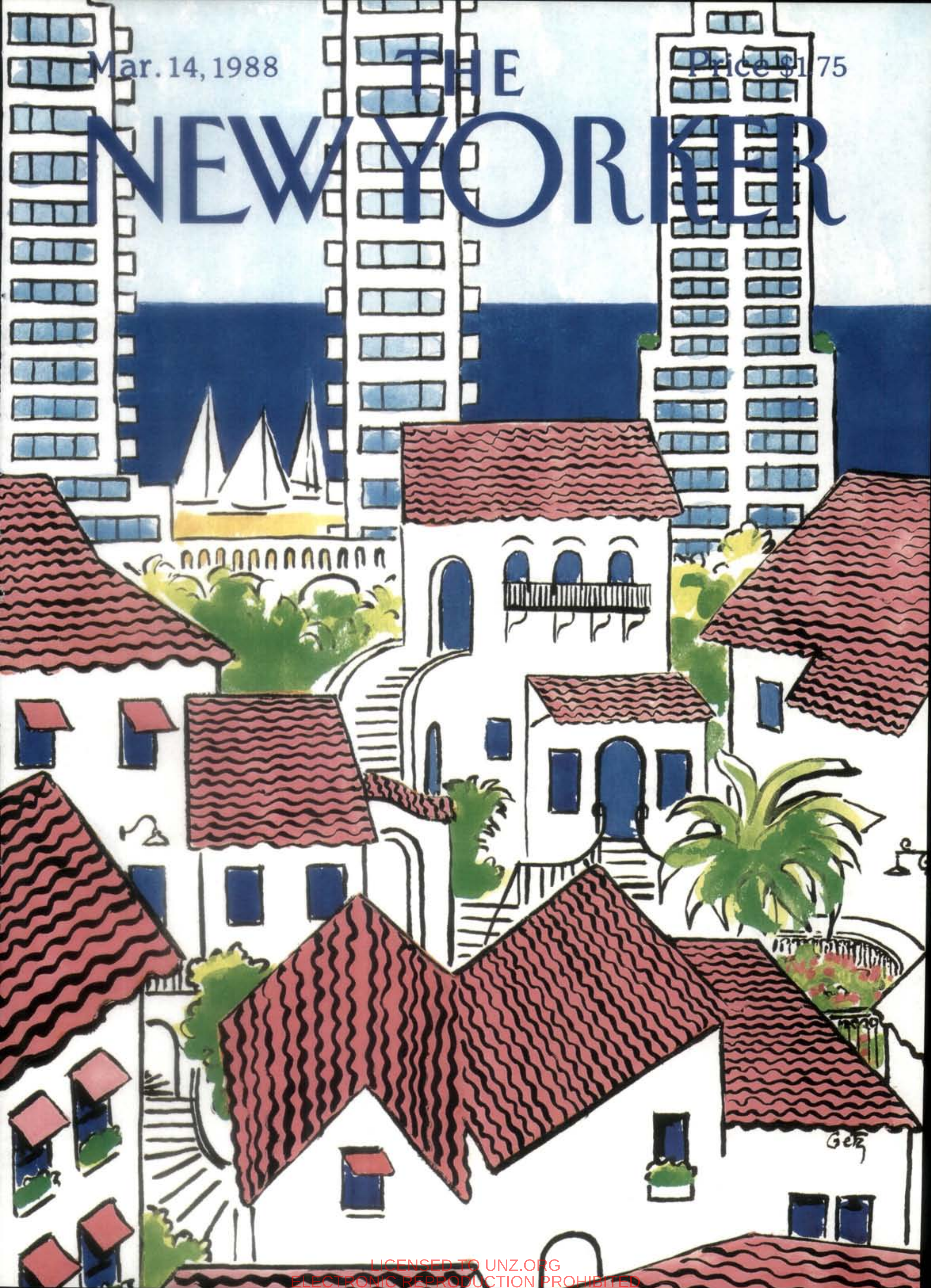

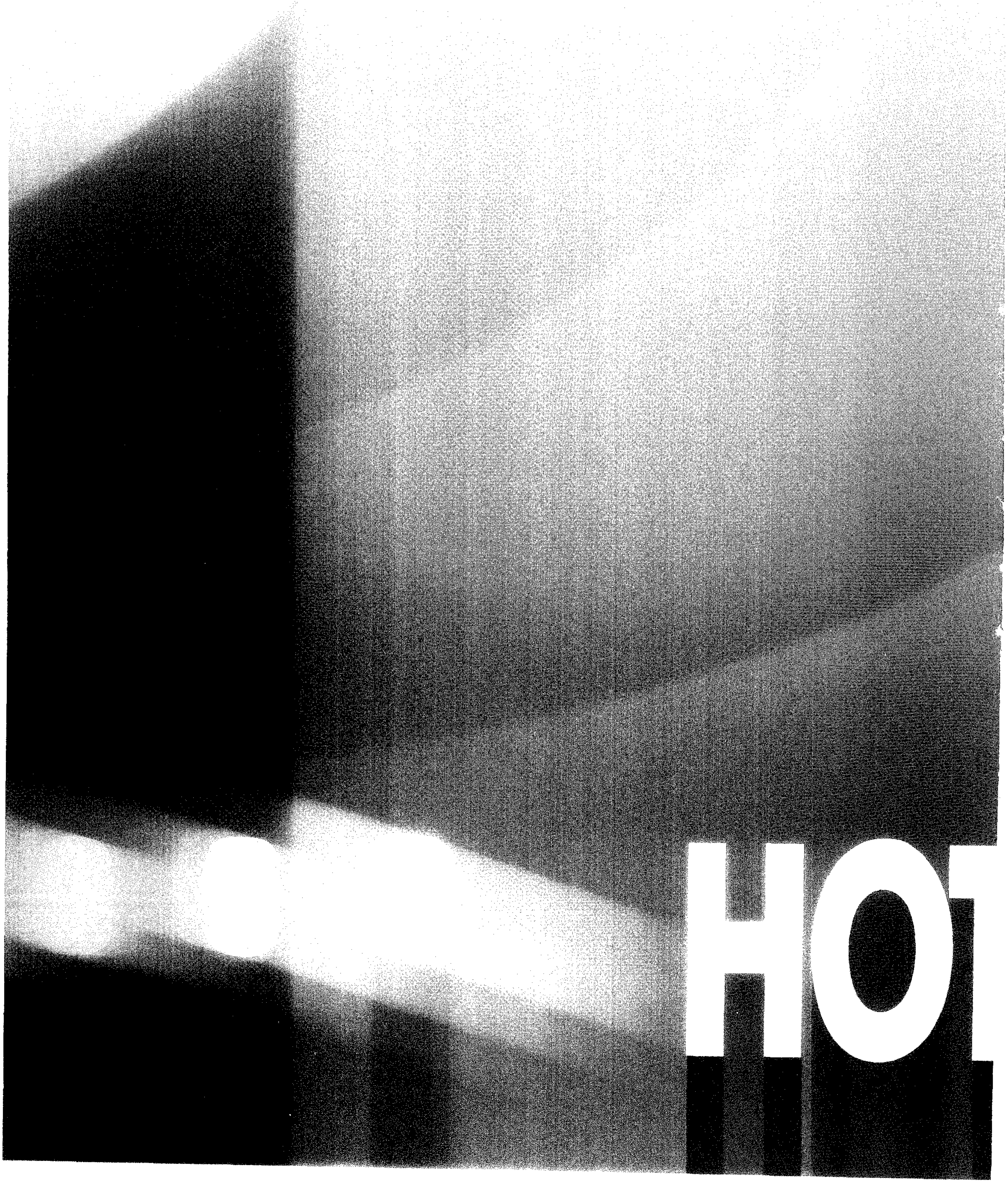

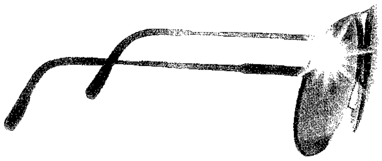

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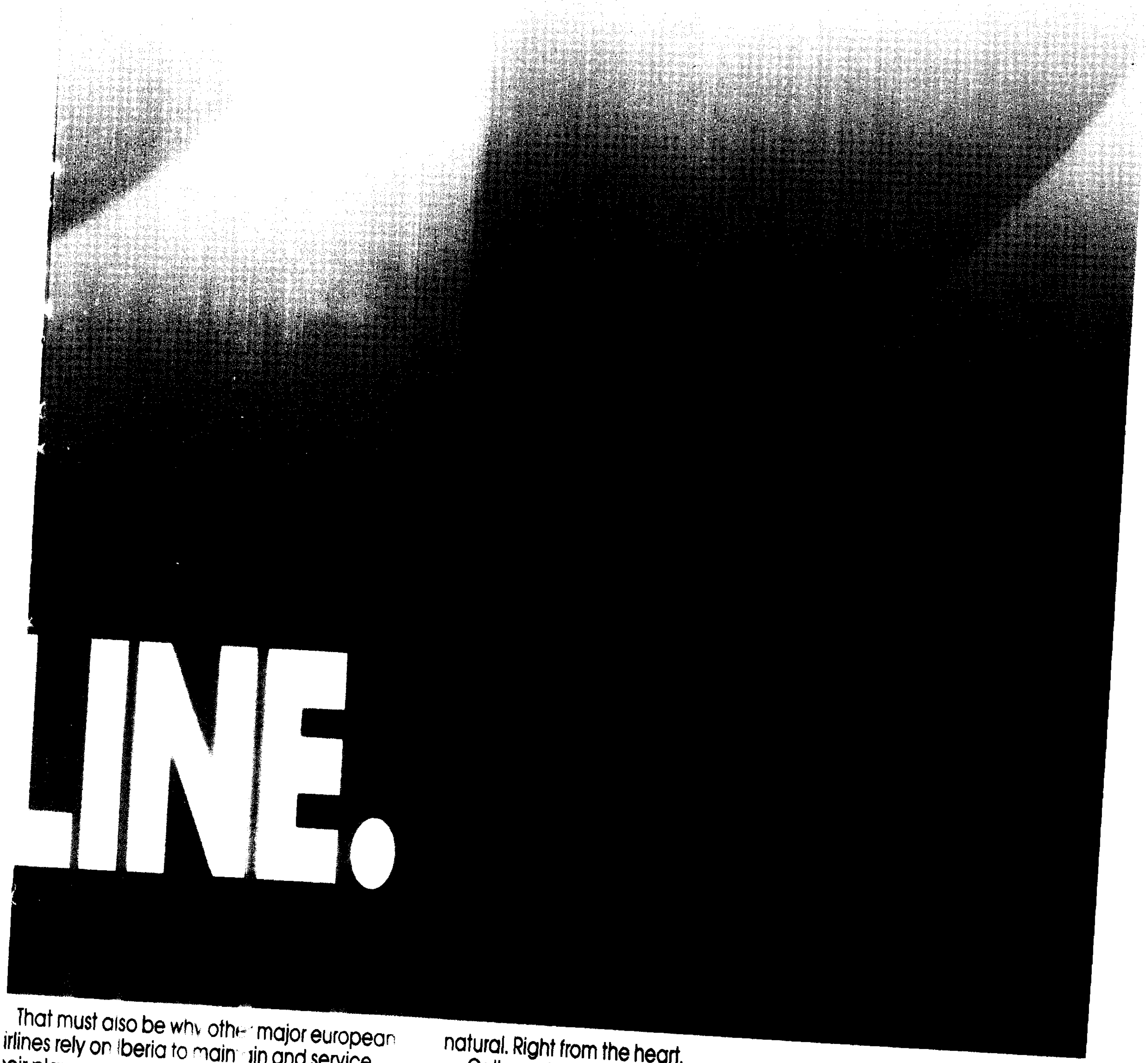

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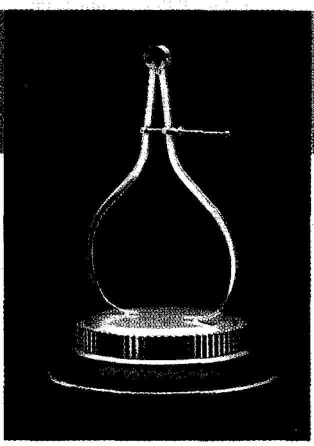

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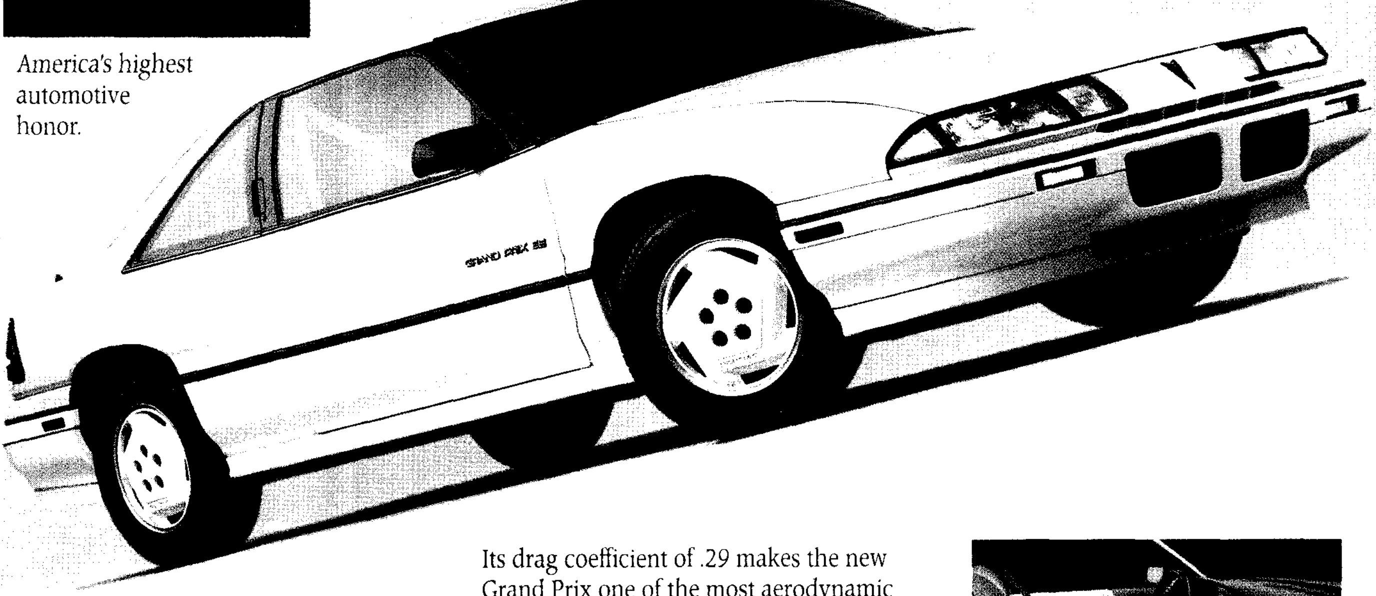

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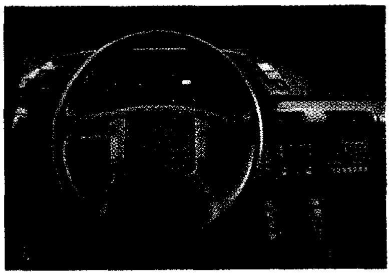

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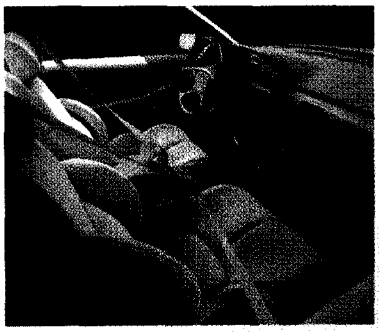

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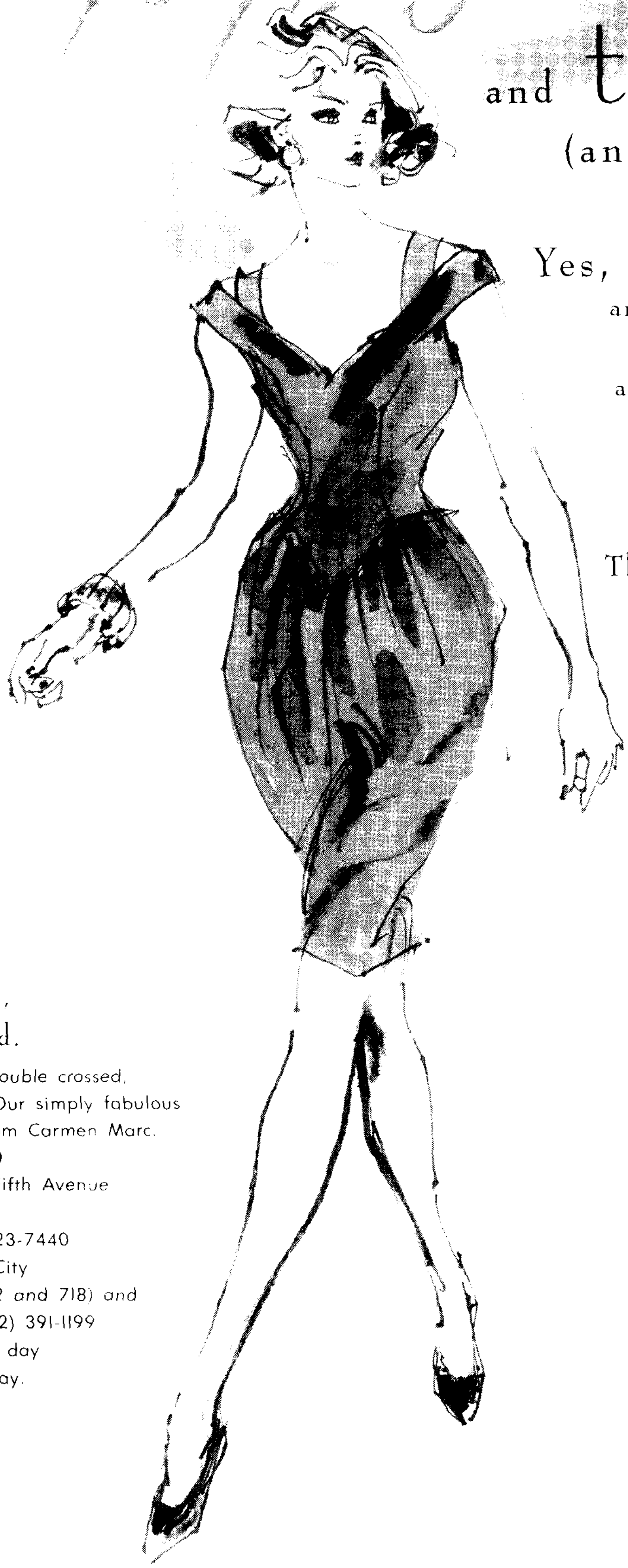

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

A CONSCIENTIOUS CALENDAR OF EVENTS OF INTEREST

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THE THEATRE

PLAYS AND MUSICALS

After Crystal Night—A play by John Herman Shaner. (Henry Street Settlement, 466 Grand St. 598-0400. Thursday through Sunday at 7:30. Matinées Saturday and Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, March 13.)

American Notes—A play by Len Jenkin. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Nightly, except Monday, at 8. Matinées Saturday and Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, March 13.)

Another Phaedra Via Hercules—A theatrical work by Ellen Stewart. (La Mama Annex, 66 E. 4th St. 475-7710. Thursdays through Sundays at 7:30. Closes Sunday, March 20.)

Anything Goes—Under the clever direction of Jerry Zaks, this exuberant revival is primarily a celebration of Cole Porter himself. The libretto, as revised from the original by Timothy Crouse and John Weidman, is consistently entertaining. The company, which includes Bill McCutcheon, Howard McGillin, Patti LuPone, Anthony Heald, and Kathleen Mahony-Bennett, does more than justice to the words and score. (Reviewed in our issue of 11/2/87.) (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Boys' Life—A comedy by Howard Korder. (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. Tuesday through Saturday at 8, and Sunday at 7:30. Matinées Saturday and Sunday at 2. Closes Sunday, March 13.)

The Boys Next Door—The "boys" are three retarded men and a schizophrenic who, under professional supervision, share an apartment. Tom Griffin's good play, though inevitably touching, is also often very funny, and never sentimental. It is acted to near-perfection by a first-rate company, which includes Christine Estabrook, Josh Mostel, and William Jay. (2/22/88) (Lambs, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Breaking the Code—Derek Jacobi is accomplished and fascinating as the English mathematician Alan Turing, who helped crack the German Enigma code during the war, but Hugh Whitemore's script is more vehicle than play. Michael Gough, Rachel Gurney, and Jenny Agutter are among the good supporting actors. Clifford Williams was the director. (11/30/87) (Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 246-0102. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Burn This—Lanford Wilson's play can be considered an occasion for an astonishing performance by John Malkovich, as a foul-mouthed restaurant manager who woos and wins his dead brother's dancing partner. The supporting actors—Joan Allen, Jonathan Hogan, and Lou Liberatore—are also good. Marshall W. Mason was the director, and the distinguished setting was designed by John Lee Beatty and lighted by Dennis Parichy. (10/26/87) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Cabaret—This tasteful revival of the 1966 musical by John Kander and Fred Ebb (directed by Harold Prince) has a gloriously muted Joel Grey re-creating his role as the Emcee and a sterling performance by Alyson Reed, who plays Sally Bowles as she was always meant to be played. (11/2/87) (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 869-0550. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

The Cherry Orchard—Even the fine performances of Erland Josephson as wistful, hapless Gaev and Željko Ivanek as scruffy, passionate Trofimov cannot shed light on Peter Brook's opaque production of Chekhov's masterpiece. (2/8/88) (Majestic, 651 Fulton St., about a block east of Flatbush Ave., Brooklyn. 1-718 636-4100. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays at 3 and Sundays at 2.)

Equity Library Theatre—A revival of **Leave It to Me,** Cole Porter's 1938 musical, will be the sixth in this season's series of eight productions. Opens Thursday, March 10, and will run through Sunday, April 3. (Equity Library Theatre, 103rd St. and Riverside Dr. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2:30. For information about tickets, for which contributions are requested, call 663-2028.)

Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune—Terrence McNally's enchanting comedy about sex and the sudden onset of love in an apartment on Tenth Avenue in the Fifties. Kathy Bates and Kenneth Welsh are remarkable, under the direction of Paul Benedict. (11/9/87) (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3. Special performance for the Equity Fights AIDS Fund on Monday, March 14, at 8.)

Into the Woods—The new musical by Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine is an attempt to show what lurks beneath the surface of conventional fairy tales. The amusing first half is like a musical staging of Bruno Bettelheim's "The Uses of Enchantment." The rather nasty second half degenerates into cheap philosophy. The costumes (by Ann Hould-Ward) and sets (by Tony Straiges) are pretty to look at, and the songs are beautiful or funny—sometimes both. The superb cast, led by Bernadette Peters, who will be replaced by Betsy Joslyn for the evening performance March 8 and the matinée March 9, and Joanna Gleason, is directed by Mr. Lapine. (11/16/87) (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 246-6363. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

A Midsummer Night's Dream—This is as much a celebration of Shakespeare's comedy as a presentation of it, with A. J. Antoon at the helm. The real source of magic lies in the beautiful scenery of Andrew Jackness and the rich, gorgeous score by Michael Ward. (1/25/88)

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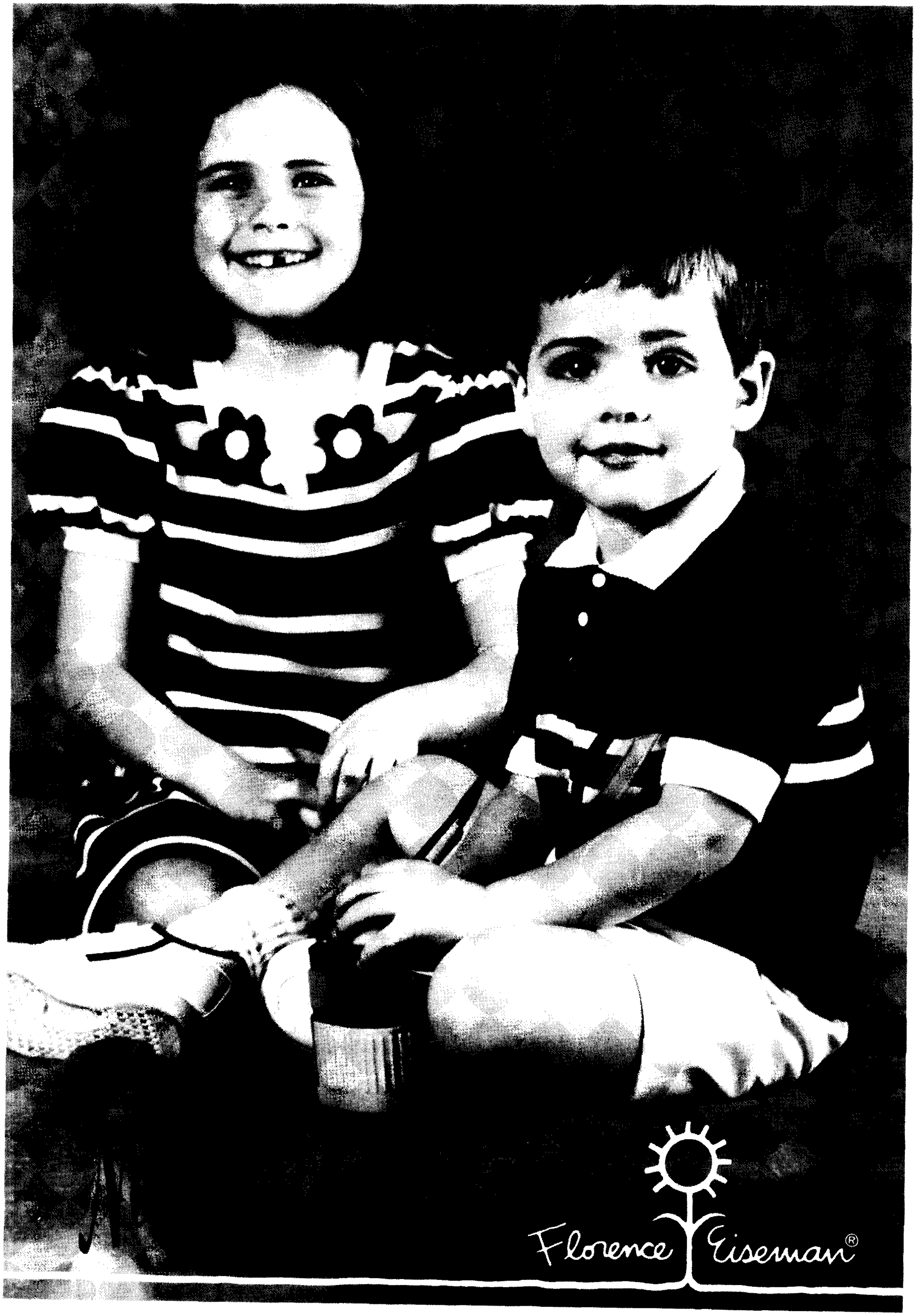
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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

(Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays at 2, Saturdays at 2:30, and Sundays at 3. Closes Sunday, March 27.)

The Music Man—A revival by the New York City Opera of the Meredith Willson musical. With Bob Gunton in the title role and Leigh Munro as Marian the Librarian. Donald Pippin is the conductor, and Arthur Masella the director. (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

The No-Frills Revue—An unpretentious, jokey little show conceived and directed by Martin Charnin. Most of the lively songs—words and music—were written by Mr. Charnin, and the two funniest sketches were contributed by Thomas Meehan. (2/22/88) (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Oil City Symphony—Mike Craver, Mark Hardwick, Debra Monk, and Mary Murfitt, gifted and sophisticated singers and instrumentalists, appear as a quartet of dedicated hicks reuniting at their small-town high school in this very funny, very musical musical. Mr. Hardwick and Miss Monk, by the way, are alumni of the beguiling "Pump Boys and Dinettes" of blessed memory. (1/18/88) (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 254-6330. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

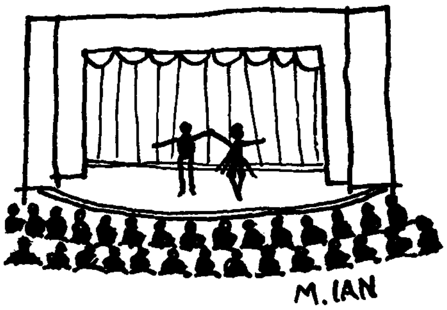
Penn & Teller—Back with an even tighter version of their wonderful 1985 show, this two-man team of stage-magic farceurs is probably the hippest thing in high culture since Talking Heads went mainstream. Directed by Art Wolff, with cameo appearances by Director of Covert Activities Marc Garland. (12/21/87) (Ritz, 219 W. 48th St. 582-4022. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3. Closes Sunday, March 20.)

The Phantom of the Opera—The much ballyhooed Andrew Lloyd Webber musical is fun—if you're not bothered by theatre that cares not a whit for words and contains not one ghost of an idea. Except for the sets (by Maria Björnson), everything about the show is negligible, including the overhyped performances by Michael Crawford and Sarah Brightman in the leading roles. (2/8/88) (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Psycho Beach Party—A romp through early-sixties beach-blanket movies, written by Charles Busch and starring Mr. Busch as a Gidget-like figure with a Marnie-like problem. (8/10/87) (Players, 115 Macdougal St. 254-5076. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Sarafina!—This musical, an explosion of talent, has moved from Off Broadway to Broadway. An import from South Africa, it was conceived, written, and directed by Mbongeni Ngema, who also, with Hugh Masekela, composed and arranged the score. It is a show about a show that is put on by a brave group of high-school students in Soweto, and that dramatizes the events in their lives. The events are bleak, but the spirits are blazing and the acting, dancing, and singing, to a local form of popular music called Mbaqanga, are a wonder. (11/9/87) (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

A Shayna Maidel—A well-wrought and deeply moving play by Barbara Lebow about a Polish-Jewish family torn apart by the events of the Hitler era. The production is beautifully directed by Mary B. Robinson and is enhanced by two extraordinary performances: one from Gordana Rashovich as a concentration-camp survivor and the other from Paul Sparer as the father who failed to get her and her mother out of Poland. The year 1946 is perfectly evoked by William Barclay's setting. Bring lots of Kleenex to this one, but expect to leave uplifted. (11/30/87) (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)



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A Streetcar Named Desire—A revival of the Tennessee Williams classic, with Blythe Danner, Aidan Quinn, Frances McDormand, and Frank Converse. Nikos Psacharopoulos is the director. Previews Tuesday and Wednesday, March 8-9. Opens officially on Thursday, March 10. (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8; opening-night curtain at 6:15. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

A Subject of Childhood—A play by Loren-Paul Caplin. (WPA Theatre, 519 W. 23rd St. 206-0523. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Tamara—A participatory theatrical encounter, in which the audience must literally follow the characters as they move from room to room in what is supposed to be Gabriele D'Annunzio's villa. Pre-happening cocktails and a buffet at intermission are included in the rather hefty ticket price ($90 to $135). (7th Regiment Armory, Park Ave. at 66th St. 307-7171. Nightly, except Thursdays and Friday, March 11, at 8; cocktails at 7:30. Matinée Wednesday, March 9, at 2; cocktails at 1:30.)

Tapman—Moses Gunn, as a blues musician at the end of his career, is the strong pivot of Karen Jones-Meadows' play, which is somewhat rickety to start with but improves as it goes. With Seret Scott and Dean Irby, among others. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Hudson Guild Theatre, 441 W. 26th St. 760-9810. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3. The Friday, March 11, performance will have two sign-language interpreters.)

A Walk in the Woods—Lee Blessing's absorbing play is set near Geneva and consists entirely of the conversations, over a year or so, of an American and a Soviet diplomat who have gone there to negotiate an arms treaty. No agreement is reached, but a friendship grows and deepens. Under the direction of Des McAnuff, Sam Waterston and Robert Prosky give performances as distinguished as the roles themselves. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Wenceslas Square—This play, by the late Larry Shue, about an American professor and one of his students, who are in Prague in 1974, is insubstantial, but, under the imaginative direction of Jerry Zaks, it is always fascinating, whether funny or sad. A cast of only four fine actors appear as the many characters, Czech and American. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

Woman in Mind—Alan Ayckbourn, the English dramatist, has written a comedy about a woman who sporadically departs from reality for a world of her own, and he has done it with such wit that it takes the audience quite a while to realize that her mental unbalance is more serious than it first appears to be. Stockard Channing is fine in the leading role, and she is ably supported by Daniel Gerroll, Simon Jones, Remak Ramsay, Patricia Conolly, and Michael Countryman, among other good actors. Lynne Meadow directed. (2/29/88) (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 246-8989. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2:30; special matinée Wednesday, March 16. Closes Sunday, March 20.)

Long Runs—**Broadway Bound:** A rueful comedy in which Neil Simon studies the middle-class depths from which he sprang and has kept springing. (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Mondays through Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **Cats:** Some twenty poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacle about mighty little, owing its effectiveness to Trevor Nunn's direction and to the sets and costumes by John Napier. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **A Chorus Line:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **Driving Miss Daisy:** Frances Sternhagen and Earle Hyman star in Alfred Uhry's play, which tells of the growing attachment of a cranky old woman in Atlanta to her black chauffeur. Directed by Ron Lagomarsino. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **The Fantasticks:** 11,600 performances so far. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **Fences:** Billy Dee Williams has the lead in August Wilson's powerful play. Lloyd Richards directed. (46th Street Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. 246-0102. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **42nd Street:** A musical based on the old Warner Brothers movie, and by no means an improvement on it. Directed and choreographed by the late Gower Champion. (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 398-0280. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8:15. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:15, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **Me and My Girl:** An infelicitously rehabilitated British musical out of the thirties. (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 246-0102. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **Les Misérables:** Gary Morris and Anthony Crivello star in the musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel, but the real standouts of the production are the settings, by John Napier, and the lighting, by David Hersey. (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2.) . . . **The Nerd:** This farce by Larry Shue is a source of laughter from beginning to end. (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 944-9450. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **Nunsense:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **Starlight Express:** A bore on roller skates. (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 586-6510. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **Steel Magnolias:** This first play by Robert Harling is set in a beauty shop in a small town in Louisiana, and consists mainly of the often amusing, wisecracking chatter of the proprietress, her assistant, and four steady customers. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 6 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3. Special performance for the Equity Fights AIDS Fund on Monday, March 7, at 8.)

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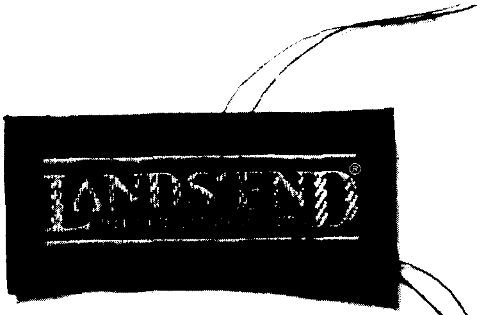

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316 E. 91st St. 831-2000. Wednesday through Saturday at 8. Matinées Wednesday at 2 and Saturday and Sunday at 3:30. Closes Sunday, March 13.)

Liliane Montevecchi on the Boulevard—A one-woman show. (Kaufman, 534 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Nightly, except Tuesdays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays, and Sundays, at 5.)

Odd Jobbers—A fifty-minute show written and performed by Michael Heintzman, Terry Hempleman, and Marguerite Kuhn. A presentation of the Lunchtime Humorists Series. (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 247-0393. Thursdays and Fridays at 1.)

Opera Ensemble of New York—Presenting a revival of **A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC**, Stephen Sondheim's 1973 musical. Staged by John J. D. Sheehan. (Lillie Blake School Theatre, 45 E. 81st St. Wednesday, March 9, at 7; Friday, March 11, and Wednesday, March 16, at 8; and Sunday, March 13, at 3. Closes Sunday, March 27. For information about tickets, call 288-1485.)

DANCE

Merce Cunningham Dance Company—Tuesday evening, March 8: "Points in Space," "Quartet," and "Locale."... ¶ Wednesday evening, March 9: "Doubles," "Eleven" (première), and "Grange Eve."... ¶ Thursday and Friday evenings, March 10-11: "Points in Space," "Quartet," and "Locale."... ¶ Saturday evening, March 12; Sunday matinée and evening, March 13; and Tuesday and Wednesday evenings, March 15-16: "Septet," "Shards," and "Pictures." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 2. Through Sunday, March 27.)

Phoebe Neville Dance Company—A program of new and repertory works. (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Thursday through Saturday, March 10-12, at 8; Sunday, March 13, at 3; and Monday, March 14, at 8.)

NIGHT LIFE

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town.... ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

Algonquin Hotel, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—**ANDREA MARCOVICCI,** an actress (she was Woody Allen's girlfriend in "The Front") and singer who carries a torch for old love songs, performs in the Oak Room Tuesdays at nine-fifteen and Wednesdays through Saturdays at nine-fifteen and eleven-fifteen. Dining.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—A really blue but not really New York jazz club; the idea for the brass plaques that are engraved with the names of visiting jazz stars and embedded in the blue tables appears to have been borrowed from Hollywood. Trumpeter **VALERY PONOMAREV,** a graduate of Art Blakey's school of hard bop, leads a combo on Monday, March 7; Tuesday through Sunday, March 8-13, **MILT JACKSON** taps out dancing solos on his twinkling vibraharp, with support from pianist **MONTY ALEXANDER'S** trio; and on Monday, March 14, saxophonist **JOE ROCCISANO** brings in a band. Music from nine. Dining.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—On the east side of the building, behind a dusty display window, there's a New York *Post* review of a Santana concert that took place here circa 1978; curatorial neglect seems to have made it a permanent exhibit. Inside, on Monday and Tuesday, March 7-8, there's **DONOVAN,** a model of mellowness for sixties youth; on Wednesday, March 9, **TAJ MAHAL** shares the bill with the **DIRTY DOZEN BRASS BAND,** a New Orleans octet whose repertoire runs from traditional parade-band tunes to Ellington, Monk, and its own high-stepping members; **MARTI JONES** and **DON DIXON,** a country-rock singer and her singing producer, perform Friday and Saturday, March 11-12; and **LYLE LOVETT,** a new-wave country boy with a cool haircut and a cool attitude, will be here on Monday, March 14. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at eight and eleven, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty. Dining.

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Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A great up-close view from a barstool (unless there are a lot of standees, which is usually the case) of first-rate pianists, bassists, and, occasionally, horn players. **LARRY WILLIS** will be at the piano through Saturday, March 12; a trio of Memphis-born hard-boppers—tenor saxophonist **GEORGE COLEMAN,** pianist **HAROLD MABERN,** and bassist **JAMIL NASSER**—takes charge on Monday, March 14. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

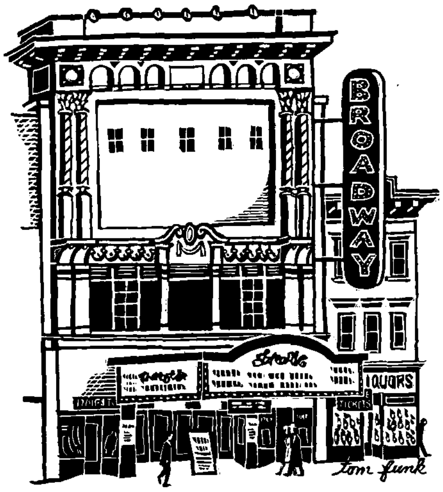
Carlos I, 432 Sixth Ave., at 10th St. (982-3260)—Long communal tables swathed in pink and a bandstand panelled in oak. Melba Joyce sings with pianist **BROSS TOWNSEND'S** trio Tuesday through Thursday, March 8-10; Gloria Lynne is the thrush Friday through Sunday, March 11-13; and on Tuesday, March 15, **SAMMY PRICE,** a seventy-nine-year-old blues and boogie-woogie pianist, enters with a quintet. Mondays belong to baritone-sax man **HAMIET BLUIETT** and his big band. Music from nine. Dining.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The figures on the walls of the Café Carlyle—a nude at her easel; a leaping poodle; a guitarist in a harlequin outfit; an unpedigreed dog with a bonnet in its mouth—are by Marcel Vertès, and the elegant gent on the piano bench is **GEORGE SHEARING. LYNN SEATON** is on bass. Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays at ten and midnight.... ¶ Across the hall, in the Bemelmans Bar, **BARBARA CARROLL** presides at the piano from nine-forty-five Tuesdays through Saturdays.

Drums, 333 E. 60th St., near First Ave. (308-2333)—A rock lounge, within the shadow of the Fifty-ninth Street Bridge. It has about a zillion dollars' worth of sound equipment and décor, including striped jungle-cat banquettes to admire it all from. Doors open at around nine-thirty, and shows start at ten-thirty. On Monday, March 7, when the **WAILERS,** Bob Marley's old band, are here, show time is eight-thirty. Dancing.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—There's not a lot of elbow- or headroom in this downstairs jazz club, but the musicians sometimes make you forget all about it. **BUCK CLAYTON,** a Swing-era trumpeter (ret.), composer, and arranger, conducts a big band Tuesday through Sunday, March 8-13; **AL GREY,** a Basie-ite for many years and a master of plunger-style trombone, brings in a quintet on Tuesday, March 15. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL,** the Thomas Edison of reverb, leads a trio. Music from eight. Dining.

Greene Street, 101 Greene St. (925-2415)—Only slightly smaller than an airplane hangar but considerably fancier. On clear nights, the piano, situated in a grove of palms in the south-central region of the dining room, is visible from the bar. **HILTON RUIZ** is the pianist Tuesday through Saturday, March 8-12; bassist **JIMMY ROWSER** joins him Friday and Saturday. Sets begin at seven Tuesdays through Thursdays, at seven-thirty on Fridays and Saturdays, and at six-thirty on Sundays.



J's, 2581 Broadway, at 97th St. (666-3600)—An upper West Side spa, one flight up from the hurly-burly. Jazz people are on the premises nightly except Sundays, when a jukebox stocked with sixties rock and soul lights up. **DICK HYMAN,** a repository of old blues and rags and pop tunes from then and now, gives solo piano recitals on Mondays, March 7 and 14; singer-pianist Virg Dzurinko holds forth on Tuesday, March 8; **ANDY STEIN,** a violinist who is partial to the Old World swing of Joe Venuti and Stéphane Grappelli, works with guitarist **MARTY GROSZ** and clarinettist **KEN PEPLOWSKI** on Wednesday, March 9; Thursdays belong to a trio led by seven-string guitarist **JOHN PIZZARELLI;** and on Friday, March 11, Ken Peplowski returns with a trio. Music from eight Mondays through Thursdays, and from nine Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

Knickerbocker, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—A busy corner bar and restaurant with a piano at the center of things. **STEVE KUHN** works out on it with bassist **RON CARTER** at his side, Tuesday through Saturday, March 8-12. Pianist **HARRY CONNICK, JR.,** the latest good news from New Orleans, flies all by himself on Sundays and Mondays. Music from nine-thirty.

Knitting Factory, 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—Probably the only place in town that features avant-garde jazz, advanced and intermediate rock, Easy Now medicinal tea, homemade yogurt, and smoothies. **RASHIED ALI,** John Coltrane's drummer during the Master's late period, directs a quartet on Mondays, March 7 and 14. **SHELLEY HIRSCH,** who makes many curious sounds with her experimentalist's voice and makes some of them curiouser still by altering them electronically, works with trombonist Jim Staley and others on Tuesday, March 8; a trio run by guitarist **BERN NIX,** a member of the Ornette Coleman circle, peforms later that evening. Wednesday through Saturday, March 9-12, pianist **GERI ALLEN** leads a band. Activity from nine or so.

Lone Star Café, 61 Fifth Ave., at 13th St. (242-1664)—This hangout for homesick Texans, French tourists, and local yokels brags that it's "the biggest and best honky-tonk north of Abilene." Big it ain't, but it does feature some genuine honky-tonk music, a souvenir stand, and TV monitors (which permit you to watch the action onstage in case your view of it is obscured by a cowboy or a structural element). The lineup: Tuesday, March 8, blues harpist **SUGAR BLUE** and the Holmes Brothers; Wednesday, March 9, the Marshall Tucker band; Thursday, March 10, Nicholas Tremulis; Friday and Saturday, March 11-12, drummer-singer **LEVON HELM** and his followers; and Monday, March 14, **LUTHER ALLISON'S** blues band. Music after nine. Hot vittles.

Michael's Pub, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—A mid-Manhattan pub for well-heeled gents and their high-heeled foxes. A group that models itself after the Quintette du Hot Club de France—the all-string ensemble founded by Django Reinhardt and Stéphane Grappelli in 1934—is back. The Reinhardt of the band is a fleet young guitarist named **FRANK VIGNOLA. MICHELE BAUTIER,** got up as a blond thirties-style Venus, contributes vocals in Français, Anglais, and Franglais ("Darling, Je Vous Aime Beaucoup"). Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty. Dining. Closed Sundays.

Mikell's, 760 Columbus Ave., at 97th St. (864-8832)—A spiffy uptown bar and restaurant, with signed photographs of some swinging non-musicians on the walls (Reggie Jackson smiling shyly, Dave Winfield tuning up in the cage) and some heavy hitters on the bandstand. **RODNEY JONES,** a young guitarist who has worked with Dizzy Gillespie and Kenny Burrell, leads a quartet on Monday, March 7; **ROBBEN FORD,** a guitarist who moves in fusion circles, brings in a band on Friday and Saturday, March 11-12. Music from about ten until two.

Red Blazer Too, 349 W. 46th St. (262-3112)—A big, busy, theatre-district establishment devoted to traditional jazz (big- and little-band Swing, several varieties of Dixieland). Music from six on Sundays, from eight-thirty Mondays through Thursdays, and from nine Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

Ritz, 119 E. 11th St. (254-2800)—Fifty years ago, people practiced the jitterbug and the foxtrot in this ballroom, today's patrons listen mainly to rock, which issues from speakers the size of mobile homes, and sometimes engage in a combination of exercise and intimacy known as slam dancing. **JOHNNY COPELAND'S** blues band and Savoy Brown, an ancient British boogie-rock outfit, hold forth on Friday, March 11. Shows begin at nine Sundays through Thursdays, and at eleven Fridays and Saturdays.

Sounds of Brazil, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A big, cheerful room, painted a light tropical blue, where you can pick 'em up and set 'em down to sounds from Brazil, Africa, the Caribbean, and elsewhere. Ample seating for the contemplative. Tuesday, March 8, Ayizan, a Haitian rock band; Wednesday and Thursday, March 9-10, reggae man Sugar Minott; Friday and Saturday, March 11-12, **MIKATA;** and Tuesday through Thursday, March 15-17, Argentine saxophonist **GATO BARBIERI'S** band. Music from nine Tuesdays through Thursdays and from eleven on Fridays and Saturdays. Dining. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

Speakeasy, 107 Macdougal St. (598-9670)—A central Village lounge for folkies and others who practice low-decibel (but not necessarily low-voltage) music. **JOHN HERALD,** a singer and a picker attached long ago to the Greenbriar Boys, will be here with his folk-bluegrass band on Friday, March 11. **TOM INTONDI** sings on Saturday, March 12. Shows nightly from about eight-thirty. Dining.

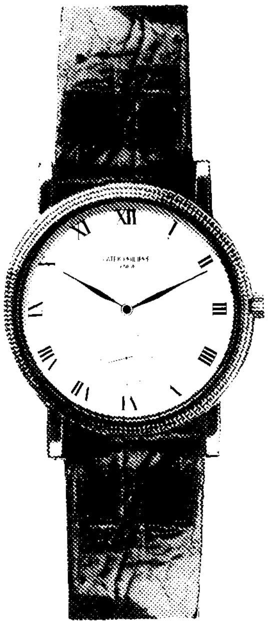
Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—**JIM HALL,** one of the wonders of contemporary jazz guitar, will be in this pine-panelled Village meetinghouse with his quartet Tuesday through Sunday, March 8-13. **STEVE LACY,** a thoroughly modern authority on the soprano saxophone, moves in with his sextet on Tuesday, March 15. Brazilian pianist **ELIANE ELIAS** leads a trio on Mondays. Shows from ten. Dining.

Sweetwaters, 170 Amsterdam Ave., at 67th St. (873-4100)—What would a night club be without smoke, mirrors, and a white piano? It wouldn't be this sleek jazz and soul room. **STANLEY TURRENTINE** and his smoky blue tenor saxophone will be in it Wednesday through Saturday, March 9-12. Music after nine. Dining.

Tramps, 125 E. 15th St. (777-5077)—"Irish" is what the canopy above the entrance to this bar says, but rock and roll is what the boys and girls in the back room mainly do. The **SURREAL MC COYS,** a local country-rock quintet, call this place home on Mondays. The other night, they did a Jim Reeves song, a couple of riding-down-the-highway-of-life numbers (one of which featured **KEVIN TRAINOR,** the band's singer and ringleader, playing careening slide guitar, using an old honky-tonk prop, a bottle of Bud, as a slide), "I Guess I Woke Up on the Right Side of the Wrong Bed Again" (a piece of Trainor whimsy that he called "a little Chinese folk song"), and a passionately declaimed song about the right to speak your mind in the U.S.A. The rest of the lineup: Tuesday, March 8, the Clan; Thursday, March 10, Charlotte Brown (at seven) and Freddie White; Saturday, March 12, the A-Bones; and Sunday, March 13, the Pacific Orchestra and the Cornflakes. Shows after (sometimes long after) nine-thirty.

Village Gate, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—The Monday-night salsa-*con*-jazz sessions resume in the downstairs rumpus room on Monday, March 7. The season opener features ensembles led by **TITO PUENTE** and **RAY BARRETTO,** plus alto saxophonist **PAQUITO D'RIVERA,** who does a solo turn with both bands. The following Monday belongs to **MANNY OQUENDO'S LIBRE, MONGO SANTAMARIA'S** band, and flutist **DAVE VALENTIN.** Music from nine. . . . ¶ One flight up, in the airy space known as the Terrace Bar, the piano-bass team of **MIKE LONGO** and **BEN BROWN** performs Tuesday through Sunday, March 8-13; pianist-singer **BROOKS KERR,** a major fund of Ellingtonia, comes in with bassist **BOB FIELD** on Tuesday, March 15. On Tuesdays, the visiting duo trades sets with **HELLMAN'S ANGELS,** a string trio whose head angel, **DAPHNE HELLMAN,** plays the harp. Music from ten.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th



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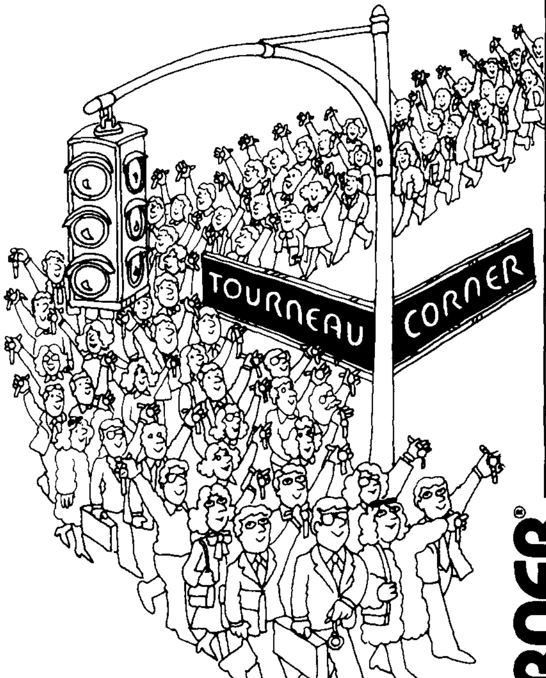

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St. (255-4037)—People from all over the world descend the stairs to this ancient jazz club; many of them later emerge from it in an excited condition. **SPHERE,** a quartet that takes its name and some of its repertoire from Thelonious Sphere Monk, will be around Tuesday through Sunday, March 8-13; alto saxophonists **RICHIE COLE** and **HANK CRAWFORD** co-pilot a quartet starting Tuesday, March 15. Mondays are prime time for the **MEL LEWIS** big band. Music from ten.

West End, 2911 Broadway, at 113th St. (666-8750)—The big room in this student rest stop (Columbia U. is across the street) has a non-institutional cafeteria, a bar that can seat a marching band, and a jukebox. The smaller room has tables, booths, a couple of hanging plants, and live jazz. **LOU DONALDSON,** a bop-rooted alto saxophonist and a Southern-fried humorist, leads a quartet Wednesday through Sunday, March 9-13; drummer **MICHAEL CARVIN** brings in a quintet on Wednesday, March 16. On Mondays, comedians stand up and fall down. Shows from about nine.

Zinno, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—If you like pictures of cows, there's a good one here, by the British painter Malcolm Morley, of some Holsteins adrift in a Turneresque landscape. There's also jazz, which flows peaceably from a passageway between the front-room bar and the back-room restaurant. Two top-notch guitar-bass teams are making all the sounds here. **TAL FARLOW** and **GARY MAZZAROPPI** work Mondays through Saturdays from eight, and **GENE BERTONCINI** and **MICHAEL MOORE** go from seven on Sundays.

JAZZ / ROCK / PERSONAL APPEARANCES / PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

Jeffrey Essmann—La Mama, 74A E. 4th St. 475-7710. Tuesday and Wednesday, March 8-9, and Wednesday, March 16, at 8.

Kodō—City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 246-8989. Tuesday, March 8, at 7:30 (with guest artist Max Roach); Wednesday through Friday, March 9-11, at 8; Saturday, March 12, at 2 and 8; and Sunday, March 13, at 3.

Jo Andres—La Mama, 74A E. 4th St. 475-7710. Thursdays through Saturdays at 10 P.M. Through Saturday, March 19.

Highlights in Jazz—Milt Hinton, Doc Cheatham, Buddy Tate, Mel Lewis, and others in a salute to Dick Hyman, who will also perform. (Loeb Student Center Auditorium, New York University, Washington Sq. S. and LaGuardia Pl. 998-4949. Thursday, March 10, at 8.)

Barry Harris Trio—New School, 66 W. 12th St. Friday, March 11, at 6. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.

Corina Bartra—Washington Square Church, 135 W. 4th St. Friday, March 11, at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.

"The Jazz Section"—With Dan Froot, Dan Hurlin, and others. (P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288. Friday, March 11, at 10, and Saturday and Sunday, March 12-13, at 8. Through Sunday, April 3.)

Istvan Kantor—Franklin Furnace, 112 Franklin St. 925-4671. Friday and Saturday, March 11-12, at 8:30.

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"Wilderness"—A film-performance work by Power Boothe, with Catlin Cobb and Steven Fechter. (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Fridays and Saturdays at 11 P.M. Through Saturday, March 19.)

Wall-to-Wall Cole Porter—A twelve-hour marathon, with Bobby Short, Julie Wilson, Liliane Montevecchi, Steve Ross, and others. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Saturday, March 12, from 11 A.M. to 11 P.M.)

Dick Hyman—In the second of two concert-lectures. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-4410. Sunday, March 13, at 4.)

Fred Fried—Weill Recital Hall, at Carnegie Hall. Wednesday, March 16, at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.

Frank Patterson—With assisting artists. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 757-3100. Wednesday, March 16, at 8.)

The Chieftains—With the Nelson Village Dancers. (Avery Fisher Hall. 874-2424. Wednesday, March 16, at 8.)

ART

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

Varujan Boghosian—New collages. Through March 19. (Cordier & Ekstrom, 417 E. 75th St.)

Fanny Brennan—Very small surreal paintings. Through April 1. (Coe Kerr, 49 E. 82nd St. Open Mondays.)

Susan Crile—Abstract pastels. Through March 26. (Graham, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St.)

Glenn Goldberg—Abstractions painted on wood. Through Thursday, March 10. (Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St.)

Luise Kaish—Abstract paintings. Through March 26. (Staempfli, 47 E. 77th St.)

David Levine—A new set of caricatures. Through March 19. (Forum, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

Philip Pearlstein—Paintings of nudes posed with assorted objects—a wood mannequin, a decoy, cast-iron toys. Through Tuesday, March 15. (Hirschl & Adler Modern, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St.)

Kikuo Saito / Mark Davis—Color-field paintings. / Still-life paintings and drawings. Through April 1. (Salander-O'Reilly, 22 E. 80th St. Open Mondays.)

Lorraine Shemesh—Paintings and drawings of, among other things, a beach ball, bowling shoes, and pastries; also, quilts with scenes from a dance class and of a swimming pool. Through March 30. (Stone, 48 E. 86th St.)

Hunt Slonem—Grisaille paintings housed in old gilt frames and depicting groups of tropical birds and animals. Through April 2. (McCoy, 19 E. 71st St.)

Bob Thompson (1937-66)—Figurative paintings. Through April 9. (Vanderwoude Tananbaum, 24 E. 81st St.)

Dorothy Zilka—Nine landscapes with tall, curving trees and squat hills; the mediums include oil stick and torn paper. Through March 19. (Schlesinger-Boisanté, 822 Madison Ave., at 69th St.)

Group Shows—At the **MATHES,** 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St.: Figurative drawings by twentieth-century sculptors, including Calder, Giacometti, Moore, and Bourgeois. Through April 1. . . . **SIMON-NEUMAN,** 42 E. 76th St.: Sculptures, drawings, and paintings by Barbro Bäckström, David Storey, and Alan Uglow. Through March 19. . . . **SPANISH INSTITUTE,** 684 Park Ave., at 68th St.: A strong show of contemporary Spanish art, mounted in homage to the late Madrid dealer Fernando Vijande. Artists include Zush, José Maria Sicilia, and Luis Gordillo. Through March 19. (Open Mondays.)

GALLERIES—57TH STREET AREA

Milet Andrejevic—Allegorical paintings in which Greek gods mingle with habitués of Central Park. Through March 30. (Schoelkopf, 50 W. 57th St.)

Glen Baxter / Jan Knap—Humorous pastels of gravity-defying people and objects. / Narrative paintings with religious references. Through March 19. (Holly Solomon, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Jake Berthot—New abstract paintings. Through March 30. (McKee, 41 E. 57th St.)

Ronald Bladen (1918-88) / **Anne Ryan** (1889-1954)—Wood-and-aluminum wall sculptures in what has become a memorial exhibit for the artist, who died recently. / Paper-and-fabric collages. Through March 19. (Washburn, 41 E. 57th St.)

Karen Breunig—Expressionist landscapes on unstretched canvases. Through Thursday, March 10. (Kraushaar, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Martha Diamond—Abstractions from cityscapes. Through March 26. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St.)

Morris Graves—A survey of works on paper dating from 1937 to 1986. Through March 26. (Schmidt Bingham, 41 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Minoru Kawabata—Abstract paintings. Through March 26. (Tilton, 24 W. 57th St.)

Robert Moskowitz / Ronald Davis—Large-scale figurative paintings and drawings—a dog howling at the moon, for instance. / Geometric paintings. Through March 26. (Blum Helman, 20 W. 57th St.)

Meret Oppenheim (1913-86)—Thirty works from all phases of her long career, including early Surrealist objects made of leather and fur. Through April 9. (Kent, 41 E. 57th St.)

Lincoln Perry—Studies for his mural in St. Louis based on Homer's "Odyssey," plus other paintings. Through March 30. (Tatistcheff, 50 W. 57th St.)

Dorothea Rockburne / Arthur Gibbons—Paintings. Through April 2. / New polychrome steel

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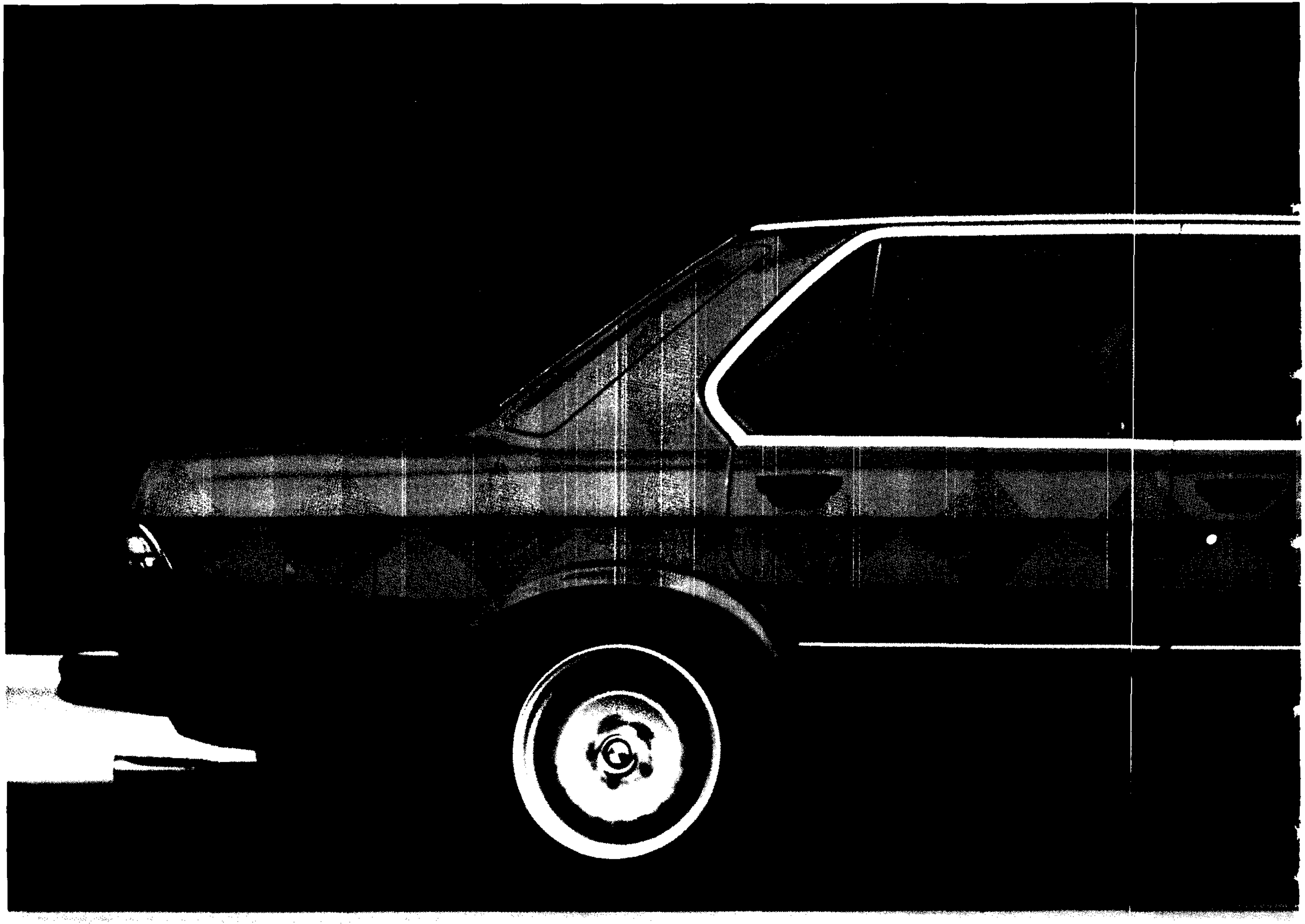

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At the same time, while your heart is at the racecourse, your body is pleasantly ensconced in torso-hugging, eight-way leather sports seats.

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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sculptures. Through March 19. (Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St.)

James Rosati (1912-88) / **Grover Mouton**—Fifty-two sculptures in stone and metal, plus drawings, in this survey, which the artist oversaw before his death last month. / Large-scale expressionistic drawings. Through March 26. (Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Paul Rotterdam / **Alberto Giacometti** (1901-66)—Recent paintings and drawings. Through Saturday, March 12. / Sculptures, paintings, drawings, and prints. Through April 30. (Herstand, 24 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

William Turnbull—Recent bronze sculptures. Through April 2. (Dintenfass, 50 W. 57th St.)

Robin Utterback—Mixed-medium collages and constructions. Through March 26. (De Nagy, 41 W. 57th St.)

Ger van Elk—New work. Through April 1. (Marian Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Paule Vézelay (1892-1984)—Nonobjective works on paper and minimalist wire-and-thread constructions. Through April 2. (Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Jane Wilson / **Polly Kraft**—Land- and seascapes. / Still-lifes. Through March 30. (Fischbach, 24 W. 57th St.)

Philip Wofford / **Luis Cruz Azaceta**—Densely painted abstractions. / Drawings. Through April 2. (Frumkin-Adams, 50 W. 57th St.)

Albert York—Landscape, still-life, and figure paintings from the past twenty-five years. Through March 30. (Davis & Langdale, 231 E. 60th St.)

Group Shows—At **DAVID FINDLAY, JR.,** 41 E. 57th St.: Paintings by Gloucester and Rockport artists working between 1880 and 1975—Gifford Beal, William Paxton, Claire Shuttleworth, and others. Through April 2. . . . **LAMAGNA,** 50 W. 57th St.: Paintings, sculptures, and photographs that have altar motifs as a starting point, by Ana Mendieta, Joseph Beuys, Komar & Melamid, Neil Winokur, and others. Through March 26. . . . **MIDTOWN,** 11 E. 57th St.: Studies and paintings for WPA-sponsored murals. Artists include Isabel Bishop, Paul Cadmus, and Ben Shahn. Through April 9.

Sculpture—Works from the sixties (by Richard Artschwager, Donald Judd, Andy Warhol, and others) and the eighties (by Jenny Holzer, Jeff Koons, Allan McCollum, and others). Through March 26. (Janis, 110 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

GALLERIES—SoHo

Robert Ackerman—Recent geometric abstractions. Through Saturday, March 12. (Thorp, 103 Prince St.)

Bruno Ceccobelli—Wall sculptures. Through Saturday, March 12. (Shainman, 560 Broadway.)

Sandro Chia—Paintings and drawings from the past ten years. Through April 5. (Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St.)

Dale Chihuly—New glass sculptures. Through March 26. (Cowles, 420 West Broadway.)

Charles Clough—Recent abstract paintings. Through Tuesday, March 15. (Hanson, 415 West Broadway.)

Lauren Ewing—Three very large sculptures in which rusted steel plates are juxtaposed with colorful enamel cabinets. Through March 26. (Brown, 560 Broadway.)

Rafael Ferrer—Paintings of genre scenes in Santo Domingo, where the artist lives about half the year. Through April 6. (Hoffman, 429 West Broadway.)

Cecily Barth Firestein—Monotypes. Through March 26. (Phoenix, 568 Broadway.)

Joan Gardner / **Eliot Lable**—Portraits of the artist's friends. / Large boulders stacked on pedestals make up these new sculptures. Through Saturday, March 12. (55 Mercer Street Gallery.)

Cristos Gianakos—A very large sculpture resembling a ramp, and made of wood, steel, and glass. Also, abstract paintings on Mylar. Through April 2. (Siegeltuch, 568 Broadway, entrance on Prince St.)

Steve Gianakos—A new set of satirical black-on-white paintings. Through Saturday, March 12. (Toll, 146 Greene St.)

Michael Gitlin—Two exhibits at 568 Broadway: Sculptures at Davis (tenth floor) and drawings at Stark (first floor; opens at noon). Both shows through March 26.

Jeff Gompertz—Paintings. Through April 2. (Plumb, 81 Greene St.)

Tom Hatch—Freestanding abstract copper sculptures. Through March 26. (Beitzel, 113 Greene St.)

Will Insley / **John Hejduk**—Abstract paintings. Through March 19. / Colored-pencil architectural drawings of an imaginary city. Through April 9. (Protetch, 560 Broadway.)

Richard Kalina—Grisaille paintings. Through Saturday, March 12. (McDonald, 560 Broadway.)

Jonathan Lasker—Colorful, thickly painted abstractions. Through March 26. (Audiello, 142 Greene St.)

Jack Lembeck—Images of dolphins, pineapples, and life preservers are painted over abstract canvases. Through March 26. (Meisel, 141 Prince St.)

Tom Lieber—Large Abstract Expressionist paintings. Through March 31. (Auchincloss, 558 Broadway.)

Charles Luce / **Paul Caranicas**—An installation. / Landscapes juxtaposed with paintings of demolished artillery bunkers and other military structures from the World Wars. Through March 30. (Schreiber-Cutler, 171 Spring St.)

Gregory Mahoney—Geometric wall constructions made of, for instance, charred wood and rusted steel. First one-man show in New York. Through Saturday, March 12. (Lang & O'Hara, 568 Broadway.)

Richard Milani—Diptychs, triptychs, and single-panel works based on movie stills—i.e., Busby Berkeley star-and-flower patterns and Russian sailors' heads from "The Battleship Potemkin." Through March 19. (Rubin, 155 Spring St.)

John Miller—Abstract paintings and sculptures—all in the color brown. Through March 26. (Metro Pictures, 150 Greene St.)

Nachume Miller—Large-scale oil-and-encaustic landscapes, and preparatory drawings. Through March 19. (Exit Art, 578 Broadway.)

Frank Moore—A survey of his paintings. Through March 26. (Allen, 560 Broadway.)

Olivier Mosset—Large abstract paintings. Through March 26. (Gibson, 568 Broadway.)

David Salle—*Recent paintings.* Through April 2. (Boone, 417 West Broadway.)

Fred Sandback—Drawings and prints by a minimalist sculptor. Through March 19. (Nolan, 560 Broadway.) . . . ¶ Four new sculptures. Through June 18. (Dia Art Foundation, 155 Mercer St. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Saturdays.)

Jan Sawka—New paintings. Through March 26. (DiLaurenti, 383 West Broadway.)

Judith Shea—Fragmented bronze figures. Through March 26. (Marcus, 578 Broadway.)

Sandi Slone—Abstract paintings with a gritty texture. Through April 2. (Stephen Rosenberg, 115 Wooster St.)

Tom Uttech—Landscapes of wilderness areas in the upper Midwest. Through March 26. (Davidson, 415 West Broadway.)

Richard Wentworth—Metal sculptures representing filled buckets, oversize ladders, crutches, and wedges. Through Saturday, March 12. (Wolff, 560 Broadway.)

Allan Wexler—Proposals for houses, furniture, and other projects by this conceptual architect. Through Saturday, March 12. (Feldman, 31 Mercer St.)

Group Shows—At the **CASTELLI,** 142 Greene St.: Works by alumni of the School of Visual Arts, including Julie Wachtel, Jedd Garet, Kenny Scharf, and Susan Hambleton. Through Saturday, March 12. . . . **THE DRAWING CENTER,** 35 Wooster St.: Works on paper, mostly, by nine artists. Also, toys used by Lisa Dawn Gold to create her drawings—a top, a windup toy, a remote-control jeep. Through Wednesday, March 16. (Open Wednesday evenings until 8.) . . . **SZOKE,** 164 Mercer St.: Handmade-paper reliefs, sculptures, and collages by Sara Garden Armstrong, Charlotte Brown, Werner Pfeiffer, Phyllis Gaughran, and others. Through Saturday, March 12. (Opens at noon on Saturdays.)

OTHER GALLERIES

Dennis Adams—A very large mixed-medium wall relief entitled "Falling Water." Through March 27. (Nature Morte, 204 E. 10th St. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Bruce Conner—Drawings, photograms, and collages by an artist who also makes experimental films. Through March 19. (56 Bleecker Street Gallery.)

Robert Cronbach / **Mary Ellen Doyle**—Terra-cotta sculptures. / Watercolors. Through March 27. (Humphrey, 37 E. 7th St. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Rodney Graham—Three wall sculptures incorporating volumes of Sigmund Freud's "Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis," "Collected Papers," and "The Complete Psychological Works," which appear, spines showing, nestled amid sculptural volumes of brass and steel, polished copper, and painted wood. Through March 17. (Burgin, 270 Lafayette St.)

Rodney Alan Greenblat—Relief paintings depicting the artist's cartoonish characters on various madcap adventures. Through April 3. (Gracie Mansion Gallery, 167 Avenue A, at 10th St. Opens daily, except Mondays, at noon.)

Marcia Hafif—Flesh-colored paintings. Through March 19. (Pretto, 103 Sullivan St. Opens at 1.)

Daniel Levine—Paintings, works on paper, and wall constructions. The artist has subtly contrived to make his paintings look like drawings, and parts of his constructions look like inked photogravure plates. Through Saturday, March 12. (Neale, 320 Lafayette St.)

Roy Lichtenstein—His Picassos, dating from 1962 to 1964. Through March 31. (Gagosian, 521 W. 23rd St., near Eleventh Ave.)

Justin McCarthy (1891-1977)—A retrospective of paintings and drawings. Through Saturday, March 12. (Cavin-Morris, 100 Hudson St.)

Tom Radloff—Diagrammatic paintings and emblematic wall reliefs. Through March 20. (Loughelton, 19 Second Ave., at 1st St. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Small Works Show—The twelfth annual, this year selected by Carlo Lamagna. Through Friday, March 11. (80 Washington Square East Galleries, New York University. Open Tuesday evenings until 7.)

Group Show—Works by Salvatore Scarpitta, Susan Etkin, and David Carrino complement two of Meg Webster's sculptures—a bed-size plot of soil with clover and chamomile beginning to sprout, and a steel box filled with water from a dead lake in upstate New York. Through Sunday, March 13. (303 Gallery, 513 E. 6th St., near Avenue A. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

Josef Albers (1888-1976)—The Museum of Modern Art has mounted a show of thirty-eight black-and-white prints by this painter, whose photographs, dated from 1928 to 1932, were found after his death. See below, under "Museums," for dates and times.

Tom Baril and Suzanne Williamson—Black-and-white photographs. Through May 7. (Ledel, 168 Mercer St. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Saturdays.)

Margaret Bourke-White (1904-71)—A retrospective of works by the photojournalist who did *Life's* first cover. Through May 1. (International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Fridays, noon to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Allan Chasanoff—Still-lifes in black-and-white and color from the past three years. Through Thursday, March 10. (Pfeifer, 568 Broadway.)

Carlo Gajani / Pia Schutzmann—Cibachrome prints of the Po Valley. / Abstract paintings. Through March 26. (Urdang, 23 E. 74th St.)

David Heald—Black-and-white photographs of twelfth-century French abbeys. Through April 2. (Ward, 9 E. 93rd St. Open Mondays.)

Grace Knowlton—Photographs, including hand-painted prints of the artist's outdoor sculptures. Through April 2. (Witkin, 415 West Broadway. Opens at noon on Saturdays.)

Jerome Liebling—A retrospective of photographs that document working-class life. Through March 19. (Photofind, 138 Spring St.)

Manual—Works by photographic collaborators Suzanne Bloom and Ed Hill, who feed photographs and texts into a computer, manipulate them with a sophisticated computer-graphics program, and then make conventional photographs of the resulting video displays. Through March 26. (Laurence Miller, 138 Spring St. Opens at noon on Saturdays.)

Group Show—Multiple-image prints by Stephen Frailey, Eve Sonneman, Neil Winokur, and others. Through March 26. (Lieberman & Saul, 155 Spring St. Opens at noon on Saturdays.)

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—A show of Fragonard paintings and drawings, which has travelled here from the Grand Palais, in Paris. Through May 8. Complementing this is the display of "The Progress of Love" at the Frick Collection (see below). (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Tuesday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—An exhibit of Vito Acconci's work has as its centerpiece three reconstructed outdoor installations that are meant to be climbed through, sat on, whatever. One of them uses a half-dozen formerly abandoned cars. Through May 3. . . . ¶ Drawings by Paul Cézanne taken from five sketchbooks that are on loan from the Kunstmuseum in Basel. Starts Thursday, March 10. . . . ¶ A show of prints scanning the political and social views of more than a hundred artists working in this country during the past twenty-five years, among them Miriam Schapiro, Jane Dickson, Romare Bearden, and Hans Haacke. Through April 19. . . . **PHOTOGRAPHY:** Prints by Josef Albers. Through April 19. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—A fiftieth-anniversary show of works from the permanent collections in New York and Venice fills all the galleries. Through Sunday, March 13. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 11 to 7:45, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 4:45.)

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Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—An exhibit of Richard Artschwager's paintings and sculptures from the past twenty-five years. Through April 3. . . . ¶ A Charles Sheeler retrospective offering paintings, drawings, and photographs. Through April 17. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—A display of primitive wood carvings by natives of the South Pacific Island New Ireland. Through May 9. . . . ¶ A survey of prints by Alex Katz. Through April 11. (Open daily, except Tuesdays, 10 to 5.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—Artifacts from Carthage, including seventeen pictorial mosaics. Through May 1. (Open daily. Hours: Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 10 to 5:45; Wednesdays 10 to 9; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5.)

American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, Broadway at 155th St.—A show of a hundred paintings and sculptures by twenty-eight artists who have been nominated for Academy-Institute art awards. Among the candidates are Elizabeth Sandvig, Marja Vallila, and David Mann. Through March 27. (Open daily, except Mondays, 1 to 4.)

American Craft Museum, 40 W. 53rd St.—A survey of present-day Scandinavian crafts comprising the work of thirty-five artisans. Through April 24. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

Asia Society, Park Ave. at 70th St.—A show of ancient terra-cotta objects—toys, fertility figures, reliefs—from South and Southeast Asia. Through May 8. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—A display of Swedish silver covering a three-hundred-and-fifty-year period and including flatware that graced the tables of King Karl Johan and Queen Desideria, Prince Gustav Adolf and Princess Sybilla, and King Carl and Queen Silvia. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; and Sundays, noon to 5.)

Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St.—All fourteen canvases of Fragonard's "The Progress of Love," which is often considered his greatest work, are on view (as usual), complementing the comprehensive show of the artist's work at the Metropolitan. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—An exhibit of works by Leonid Pasternak (1862-1945), the Russian Impressionist painter and the father of Boris Pasternak. Genre scenes, landscapes, still-lifes, and portraits (of, for instance, Lenin, Tolstoy, and Einstein). Through May 22. (Open daily except Fridays and Saturdays. Hours: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, noon to 5; Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—The Drake Manuscript consists of two hundred captioned watercolors of life in the West Indies, thought to be the work of someone on the voyages of Sir Francis Drake. The manuscript is on view along with transparencies of the individual pages. Through May 1. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—Bird prints in the library's collection, organized chronologically (1550-1900) and selected so as to show a range both of birds and of print techniques. Through May 7. (Open daily, except Sundays, 10 to 5:45.)

Studio Museum in Harlem, 144 W. 125th St.—Photographs by Richard S. Roberts documenting black middle-class life in South Carolina in the twenties and thirties. Through April 3. (Open daily except Mondays and Tuesdays. Hours: Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

Folk Art Film Festival—The Museum of American Folk Art and the Donnell Library Center are sponsoring a showing of twenty-six films documenting folk-art practitioners and their works. Friday, March 11, from 6 to 10—Allie Light and Irving Saraf will introduce five of their films, including "The Monument of Chief Rolling Mountain Thunder." . . . ¶ Saturday, March 12, from 10:30 to 4:30—"New England Folk Painter: Erastus Salisbury Field," "Grandma Moses," and "The Meaders Family, North Georgia Potters," among thirteen other films. . . . ¶ Sunday, March 13, from 1:30 to 4:30—A series of five films about quilting, introduced by Pat Ferrero. (Donnell Library, 20 W. 53rd St. No tickets necessary.)

MUSIC

(The box-office number for Alice Tully Hall is 362-1911; for Avery Fisher Hall 874-2424; for Carnegie Hall and Weill Recital Hall, at Carnegie Hall, 247-7800; and for Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719. Other box-office numbers are included in the listings.)

OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—Monday, March 7, at 8: "Così Fan Tutte," with Kiri Te Kanawa, Susan Quittmeyer, David Rendall, and Håkan Hagegård; conducted by James Levine. . . . ¶ Tuesday, March 8, at 8: "Ariadne auf Naxos," with Jessye Norman, Kathleen Battle, Tatiana Troyanos, and James King; James Levine. . . . ¶ Wednesday, March 9, at 8: "Khovanshchina," with Judith Haddon, Stefka Mineva, Thomas Booth, and Denés Gulyás; James Conlon. . . . ¶ Thursday, March 10, at 8: "Turandot," with Marita Napier, Leona Mitchell, Ermanno Mauro, and Paul Plishka; Nello Santi. . . . ¶ Friday, March 11, at 8: "Così Fan Tutte," with Kiri Te Kanawa, Susan Quittmeyer, David Rendall, and Håkan Hagegård; James Levine. . . . ¶ Saturday, March 12, at 2: "Ariadne auf Naxos," with Jessye Norman, Kathleen Battle, Tatiana Troyanos, and James King; James Levine. . . . ¶ Saturday, March 12, at 8: "Khovanshchina," with Judith Haddon, Stefka Mineva, Wieslaw Ochman, and Vladimir Popov; James Conlon. . . . ¶ Monday, March 14, at 7: "Die Walküre," with Hildegard Behrens, Leonie Rysanek, Waltraud Meier, Peter Hofmann, and Theo Adam; James Levine. . . . ¶ Tuesday, March 15, at 8: "Così Fan Tutte," with Kiri Te Kanawa, Susan Quittmeyer, David Rendall, and Håkan Hagegård; James Levine. . . . ¶ Wednesday, March 16, at 8: "Les Contes d'Hoffmann," with Gwendolyn Bradley, Roberta Alexander, Martine Dupuy, Placido Domingo, and Simon Estes; Charles Dutoit. (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000.) . . . **NOTE:** On Sunday, March 13, at 7, Agnes Baltsa and Placido Domingo will appear in a concert of operatic excerpts to benefit the pension fund. Nello Santi will conduct the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra and Chorus.

"Rasputin"—A performance of excerpts from a new opera by Jay Reise, sung by Margaret Cusack, Mark S. Doss, Jon Garrison, and John Lankston, will be followed by a discussion of the work by the composer and others. (Guggenheim Museum Auditorium, Fifth Ave. at 89th St. Sunday, March 13, at 7, and Monday, March 14, at 8. For information about tickets, call 360-3503.)

Opera Orchestra of New York—Eve Queler conducting a concert version, in Italian, of Umberto Giordano's "Andrea Chénier," with Aprile Millo, soprano; Gweneth Bean, alto; Vyacheslav Polozov, tenor; and Antonio Salvadori, baritone. (Carnegie Hall. Sunday, March 13, at 8.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—Klaus Tennstedt conducting an all-Beethoven program, with Radu Lupu, piano. (Avery Fisher Hall. Thursday through Saturday, March 10-12, and Tuesday, March 15, at 8.)

Baltimore Symphony Orchestra—David Zinman conducting the New York première of John Harbison's First Symphony. Also on the program are Samuel Barber's Cello Concerto, with Yo-Yo Ma, and Dvořák's Seventh Symphony. (Carnegie Hall. Monday, March 7, at 8.)

Syracuse Symphony Orchestra—Kazuyoshi Akiyama conducting the New York première of Ezra Laderman's Concerto for Violin and Cello, with soloists Elmar Oliveira and Nathaniel Rosen; works by Dvořák and Rachmaninoff complete the program. (Carnegie Hall. Sunday, March 13, at 3.)

Philadelphia Orchestra—Erich Leinsdorf conducting, with Marc-André Hamelin, piano, and Michael Stairs, organ. (Carnegie Hall. Tuesday, March 15, at 8.)

Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra—Esa-Pekka Salonen conducting an all-Scandinavian program, with Cho-Liang Lin, violin. (Carnegie Hall. Wednesday, March 16, at 8.)

Pro Musica Nipponia and the Brooklyn Philharmonic Chamber Orchestra—Lukas Foss conducting traditional and contemporary Japanese works. The University of Michigan Percussion Ensemble will also participate. (Alice Tully Hall. Wednesday, March 9, at 8.)

Philharmonia Virtuosi—Richard Kapp conducting, with Michala Petri, recorder. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. Tuesday, March 15, at 8.)

New York Pops—Skitch Henderson conducting, with vocal soloists Jane Powell and Donna Theodore. (Carnegie Hall. Friday, March 11, at 8.)

Pro Arte Chorale and Orchestra—Bart Folse directing. (St. Bartholomew's Church, Park Ave. at 51st St. Sunday, March 13, at 3. Admission by contribution.)

Musica Viva—Walter Klauss directing Bach's "St. John Passion," with vocal soloists. (All Souls Unitarian Church, Lexington Ave. at 80th St. Sunday, March 13, at 7. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

New Amsterdam Singers—Clara Longstreth directing a performance of twentieth-century choral pieces. (Merkin Concert Hall. Sunday, March 13, at 8.)

Benefit Concert—Imre Pallo conducting the Brooklyn Philharmonic, with Joseph Malovany, tenor. (Avery Fisher Hall. Sunday, March 13, at 7:30. For information about tickets, call 354-8801.)

RECITALS

New Calliope Singers—In a program of Elizabethan-type madrigals by contemporary composers. (St. Paul's Chapel, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. Monday, March 7, at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

On Original Instruments—Malcolm Bilson, fortepiano; Stephen Hammer, oboe; William Purvis, horn; and others in an all-Beethoven program. (Merkin Concert Hall. Monday, March 7, at 8.)

Mimi Lerner—Mezzo-soprano, in her New York recital début. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. Monday, March 7, at 8.)

New York New Music Ensemble—Robert Black conducting five pieces for instrumentalists and electronic tape. (Marymount Manhattan Theatre, 221 E. 71st St. 517-0475. Monday, March 7, at 8.)

Hung-Kuan Chen—Piano. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-4410. Tuesday, March 8, at 8.)

Meliora String Quartet—Chamber music. (Alice Tully Hall. Tuesday, March 8, at 8.)

New York Consort of Viols—In a program of music and readings from seventeenth-century England. With assisting artists. (Christ and St. Stephen's Church, 120 W. 69th St. Tuesday, March 8, at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Apple Hill Chamber Players—Performing works by Beethoven, John Harbison, and Dvořák. (Merkin Concert Hall. Wednesday, March 9, at 8.)

Maurizio Pollini—Piano, in the first two of three all-Beethoven programs. (Carnegie Hall. Wednesday, March 9, and Monday, March 14, at 8.)

Sergio and Odair Assad—Classical-guitar duo. (Merkin Concert Hall. Thursday, March 10, at 8.)

Rolf Shulte and Ursula Oppens—Violin and piano, playing music by David Lang. Additional musicians will be the Omni Ensemble and Musical Elements, the latter conducted by Daniel Asia. (Greenwich House Music School, 46 Barrow St. Thursday, March 10, at 8. Admission by contribution.)

Consort of Musicke—Seventeenth-century madrigals perfomed by this group from England, which sings to lute accompaniment by its director, Anthony Rooley. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Friday, March 11, at 8.)

Annapolis Brass Quintet—In a program of pre-Baroque and contemporary music. (Weill Recital Hall. Friday, March 11, at 8.)

Gageego—A concert in memory of Morton Feldman, at which his "Crippled Symmetry" will be played. Before the performance, John Cage and Christian Wolff will discuss their association with Mr. Feldman. (City University Graduate Center Auditorium, 33 W. 42nd St. Friday, March 11, at 8. No tickets necessary.)

Beethoven Society—Presenting Lilian Kallir, piano; Ani Kavafian, violin; and Fred Sherry, cello. (Alice Tully Hall. Saturday, March 12, at 3.)

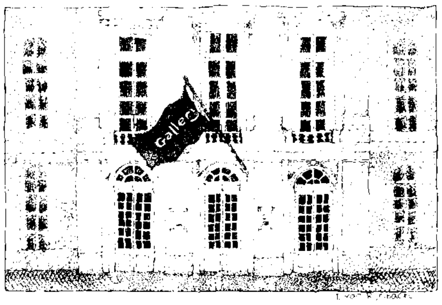
Fisk/Karr/Lewis Trio—Eliot Fisk, guitar; Gary Karr, double bass; and Harmon Lewis, harpsichord, in the New York recital début of this ensemble. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-4410. Saturday, March 12, at 8.)

Yale Chamber Music Series—The last in a series of concerts performed by various members of the Yale University School of Music. (Merkin Concert Hall. Saturday, March 12, at 8.)

Guarneri Quartet—Saturday, March 12, at 8: The third in a six-concert series presenting the Beethoven cycle. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949.) . . . ¶ Tuesday and Wednesday, March 15-16, at 8: A Beethoven-Janáček-Schumann program. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-4410.)

Shlomo Mintz and Yefim Bronfman—Violin and piano. (Avery Fisher Hall. Sunday, March 13, at 3.)

Richard Goode—The sixth in his series of seven concerts presenting all thirty-two Beethoven piano sonatas. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-4410. Sunday, March 13, at 3.)



Borodin String Quartet—Chamber music. (Alice Tully Hall. Sunday, March 13, at 3.)

For the Love of Music—Chamber music by Telemann, Britten, and Taneyev. (Merkin Concert Hall. Sunday, March 13, at 3.)

Chelsea Chamber Ensemble—In the last concert of three. (Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, Madison Ave. at 73rd St. Sunday, March 13, at 4. Admission by contribution.)

The King's Singers—An a-cappella group singing American and Lithuanian folk songs, an arrangement of Paul Simon's "You Can Call Me Al," and other works. (Alice Tully Hall. Sunday, March 13, at 8.)

Washington Square Contemporary Music Series—Chamber music by Louis Karchin, Arnold Schoenberg, and others. (Weill Recital Hall. Monday, March 14, at 8.)

New York Philomusica—Playing chamber music that features the viola. With Karen Tuttle, viola. (Merkin Concert Hall. Monday, March 14, at 8.)

New York Woodwind Quintet—In the last of a three-concert series. (Merkin Concert Hall. Tuesday, March 15, at 8.)

Leonard Raver—Organ, in a program that features the premières of David Diamond's Symphony for Organ and Gardner Read's "Phantasmagoria for Organ and English Horn." With Thomas Stacy, horn. (Alice Tully Hall. Tuesday, March 15, at 8.)

Barbara Blanchard—Soprano, in an all-Poulenc program. (Third Street Music School Settlement, 235 E. 11th St. Wednesday, March 16, at 7:30. No tickets necessary.)

Alessandra Marc—Soprano, in her New York recital début. (Alice Tully Hall. Wednesday, March 16, at 8.)

Ian Hobson—Piano. (Merkin Concert Hall. Wednesday, March 16, at 8.)

Note—Laurence Dreyfus, viola de gamba; Ketil Haugsand, harpsichord; and Christopher Krueger, transverse flute, will give a recital at the Frick Collection (1 E. 70th St.) on Sunday, March 20, at 5. Free tickets, limited to two per applicant, will be issued starting Monday, March 7, in the order that mailed applications are received. A stamped, self-addressed envelope should be enclosed.

SPORTS

(The ticket-information number for Madison Square Garden is 563-8300, for the Meadowlands 1-201 935-3900, and for Nassau Coliseum 1-516 587-9222.)

Basketball—At **MADISON SQUARE GARDEN:** Knicks vs. Chicago Bulls, Monday, March 7, at 7:30. . . . ¶ Knicks vs. Los Angeles Lakers, Wednesday, March 9, at 8. . . . ¶ Knicks vs. Utah Jazz, Saturday, March 12, at 8:30. . . . ¶ Knicks vs. Cleveland Cavaliers, Monday, March 14, at 7:30. . . . **BYRNE MEADOWLANDS ARENA:** Nets vs. Milwaukee Bucks, Wednesday, March 16, at 7:30.

Hockey—At **MADISON SQUARE GARDEN:** Rangers vs. Devils, Tuesday, March 8, at 7:35. . . . ¶ Rangers vs. Philadelphia Flyers, Tuesday, March 15, at 7:35. . . . ¶ Rangers vs. Washington Capitals, Wednesday, March 16, at 7:35. . . . **NASSAU COLISEUM:** Islanders vs. Vancouver Canucks, Tuesday, March 8, at 8:05. . . . ¶ Islanders vs. Quebec Nordiques, Thursday, March 10, at 8:05. . . . ¶ Islanders vs. Detroit Red Wings, Saturday, March 12, at 5:05.

Racing—At Aqueduct: Daily, except Tuesdays, at 1.

Trotting—At **MEADOWLANDS:** Weeknights at 7:30. . . . **ROOSEVELT RACEWAY:** Nightly at 7:30; through Tuesday, March 15. . . . **YONKERS RACEWAY:** Nightly at 8, from Wednesday, March 16, through Tuesday, May 3.

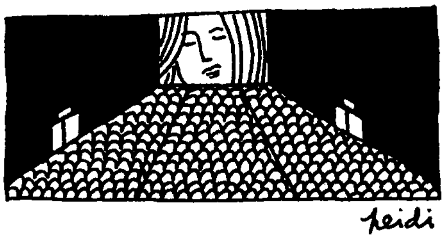
ET ALIA

Drama Readings—Marsha Norman and James Kirkwood reading from their own works. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-4410. Monday, March 14, at 8.)

New York Flower Show—An evocation of the gardens at Giverny and a topiary garden are among the special exhibits in the annual show, sponsored by the Horticultural Society of New York. (Passenger Ship Terminal, Pier 90, Twelfth Ave. at 50th St. Daily, 10 to 8; through Sunday, March 13.)

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES



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FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 20.

EAST SIDE

Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171; theatre opens in the late afternoon and is closed Mondays.)
March 8-10: "Letters from My Windmill" (1955; directed by Marcel Pagnol; in French); and "The Well-Digger's Daughter" (1940; Marcel Pagnol; in French), with Raimu, Fernandel, and Josette Day.
March 11-13: "Topaze" (1933; Louis Gasnier; in French), with Louis Jouvet; and "César" (†).
March 15: "Marius" (1931; Alexander Korda; in French), with Raimu, Pierre Fresnay, and Orane Démazis; "Fanny" (1932; Marc Allégret; in French), with Raimu, Pierre Fresnay, and Orane Démazis; and César" (†).
March 16: "Topaze;" and "Angele" (1934; Marcel Pagnol; in French), with Fernandel, Orane Démazis, and Jean Servais.

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: Through March 10: "Wall Street" (†). From March 11: "Off Limits" (Christopher Crowe), with Willem DaFoe and Gregory Hines.
Theatre 2: "Switching Channels" (Ted Kotcheff), with Kathleen Turner, Burt Reynolds, and Christopher Reeve.
Theatre 3: "Frantic" (Roman Polanski), with Harrison Ford.

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"Broadcast News" (†).

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
Through March 10: "Good Morning, Vietnam" (†).
From March 11: To be announced.

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "Moonstruck" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Unbearable Lightness of Being" (†).
Theatre 3: Through March 10: "Fatal Attraction" (†). From March 11 (tentative): "Vice Versa" (Brian Gilbert), with Judge Reinhold and Fred Savage.

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"Frantic" (Roman Polanski), with Harrison Ford.

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
Through March 10: "Hope and Glory" (†).
From March 11: "When the Wind Blows" (Jimmy T. Murakami), an animated film.

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
"Moonstruck" (†).

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"Wall Street" (†).

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
Through March 10: "Empire of the Sun" (†).
From March 11: To be announced.

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: Through March 10: "Three Men and a Baby" (Leonard Nimoy), with Tom Selleck, Steve Guttenberg, and Ted Danson. From March 11: To be announced.
Theatre 2: Through March 10: "And God Created Woman" (Roger Vadim), with Rebecca De Mornay. From March 11: To be announced.

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: Through March 10: "Moving" (Alan Metter), with Richard Pryor. From March 11: To be announced.
Theatre 2: "Broadcast News" (†).

D. W. Griffith, 235 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"Shoot to Kill" (†).

Cinema I and II, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022/0774)
Theatre 1: "Au Revoir les Enfants" ("Goodbye, Children") (†).
Theatre 2: "Good Morning, Vietnam" (†).

Gemini I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "Switching Channels" (Ted Kotcheff), with Kathleen Turner, Burt Reynolds, and Christopher Reeve.
Theatre 2: "A Night in the Life of Jimmy Reardon" (William Richert), with River Phoenix.

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"Frantic" (Roman Polanski), with Harrison Ford.

Loews New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: Through March 10: "Hairspray" (†). From March 11: "Masquerade" (Bob Swaim), with Rob Lowe and Meg Tilly.
Theatre 2: "The House on Carroll Street" (Peter Yates), with Kelly McGillis and Jeff Daniels.

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"A Month in the Country" (†).

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"The Unbearable Lightness of Being" (†).

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"A Night in the Life of Jimmy Reardon" (William Richert), with River Phoenix.

Loews Orpheum I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)
Theatre 1: "Moving" (Alan Metter), with Richard Pryor.
Theatre 2: Through March 10: "Action Jackson" (Craig R. Baxley), with Carl Weathers and Craig T. Nelson. From March 11: "Vice Versa" (Brian Gilbert), with Judge Reinhold and Fred Savage.

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Theatre 1: "Moonstruck" (†).
Theatre 2: Through March 10: "School Daze" (Spike Lee). From March 11: "Off Limits" (Christopher Crowe), with Willem DaFoe and Gregory Hines.

WEST SIDE

Film Forum I and 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; *Mondays through Fridays, theatres open in the late afternoon.)*
Theatre 1: Through March 15: "A Jumpin' Night in the Garden of Eden" (directed by Michal Goldman; in English and Yiddish), a documentary. From March 16: "Vincent: The Life and Death of Vincent van Gogh" (Paul Cox).
Theatre 2: See listings under "Revival Houses."

Bleecker St. Cinema I and 2, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)
Theatre 1: (Separate admissions) "Jean de Florette" (†) and "Manon of the Spring" (†).
Theatre 2: "Sammy and Rosie Get Laid" (†).

Waverly I and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "Hairspray" (†).
Theatre 2: "And God Created Woman" (Roger Vadim), with Rebecca De Mornay.

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
"The Last Emperor" (†).

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "Good Morning, Vietnam" (†).
Theatre 2: "The House on Carroll Street" (Peter Yates), with Kelly McGillis and Jeff Daniels.

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "The Family" (1988 †).
Theatre 2: "School Daze" (Spike Lee).
Theatre 3: "The Dead" (†).
Theatre 4: "Hope and Glory" (†).

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: Through March 10: "A Night in the Life of Jimmy Reardon" (William Richert), with River Phoenix. From March 11: To be announced.
Theatre 2: "Moving" (Alan Metter), with Richard Pryor.
Theatre 3: "Shoot to Kill" (†).

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"The House on Carroll Street" (Peter Yates), with Kelly McGillis and Jeff Daniels.

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"Good Morning, Vietnam" (†).

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)
"The Dead" (†).

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"The Last Emperor" (†).

Carnegie Hall Cinema, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)
Through March 10: "Anna" (†).
From March 11: To be announced.

Carnegie Screening Room, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (757-2131)
"The Last Minute" (Pupi Avati; in Italian), with Ugo Tognazzi.

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
"The Grand Highway" (Jean-Loup Hubert; in French).

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
(Separate admissions) "Jean de Florette" (†) and "Manon of the Spring" (†).

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"The House on Carroll Street" (Peter Yates), with Kelly McGillis and Jeff Daniels.

Lincoln Plaza 1, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "Girl from Hunan" (Xie Fei and U Lan; in Mandarin).
Theatre 2: "My Life as a Dog" (†).
Theatre 3: "High Tide" (†).

Cinema Studio I and 2, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
Theatre 1: "Frida" (1984; Paul Leduc; a Mexican film, in Spanish).
Theatre 2: "Babette's Feast" (Gabriel Axel; in Danish and French).

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
"Shoot to Kill" (†).

Embassy 72nd St. I and 2, B'way at 72nd. (724-6745)
Theatre 1: "Broadcast News" (†).
Theatre 2: "End of the Line" (Jay Russell), with Wilford Brimley and Levon Helm.

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: "The Unbearable Lightness of Being" (†).
Theatre 2: "Good Morning, Vietnam" (†).
Theatre 3: "Moonstruck" (†).
Theatre 4: "The Last Emperor" (†).
Theatre 5: "Hairspray" (†).
Theatre 6: "Frantic" (Roman Polanski), with Harrison Ford.

Metro Cinema I and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: Through March 10: "The Dead" (†). From March 11: To be announced.
Theatre 2: Through March 10: "And God Created Woman" (Roger Vadim), with Rebecca De Mornay. From March 11: To be announced.

Columbia Cinema, B'way at 103rd. (866-7500)
Through March 10: "School Daze" (Spike Lee).
From March 11: "Off Limits" (Christopher Crowe), with Willem DaFoe and Gregory Hines.

Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: "Moving" (Alan Metter), with Richard Pryor.
Theatre 2: "Switching Channels" (Ted Kotcheff), with Kathleen Turner, Burt Reynolds, and Christopher Reeve.

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: "The Serpent and the Rainbow" (directed by Wes Craven).
Theatre 2: "Moving" (Alan Metter), with Richard Pryor.
Theatre 3: "School Daze" (Spike Lee).
Theatre 4: "Prison" (Renny Harlin).
Theatre 5: "Prison."
Theatre 6: "Switching Channels" (Ted Kotcheff), with Kathleen Turner, Burt Reynolds, and Christopher Reeve.

Embassy I, B'way at 46th. (757-2408)
"Shoot to Kill" (†).

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)

Theatre 2: Through March 8: "Hairspray" (†). March 9-10: Theatre closed. From March 11: "Masquerade" (Bob Swaim), with Rob Lowe and Meg Tilly.
Theatre 3: Through March 8: "The Untouchables" (†). From March 9: "Hairspray" (†).
Theatre 4: "Fatal Attraction" (†).

Loews Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
Through March 10: "Apprentice to Murder" (R. L. Thomas), with Donald Sutherland and Chad Lowe.
From March 11: "Vice Versa" (Brian Gilbert), with Judge Reinhold and Fred Savage.

Movieland, B'way at 47th. (757-8320)
"And God Created Woman" (Roger Vadim), with Rebecca De Mornay.

National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: Through March 10: "Action Jackson" (Craig R. Baxley), with Carl Weathers and Craig T. Nelson. From March 11: "Off Limits" (Christopher Crowe), with Willem DaFoe and Gregory Hines.
Theatre 2: "Frantic" (Roman Polanski), with Harrison Ford.

Warner, 7th Ave. between 42nd and 43rd. (764-6760)
"Moonstruck" (†).

REVIVAL HOUSES

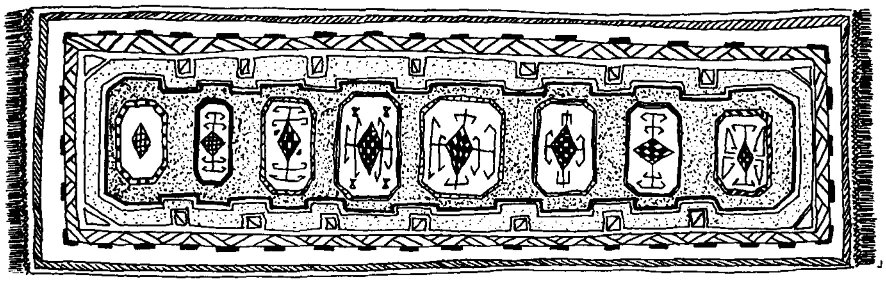
Biograph Cinema, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)
March 7: "The Rains Came" (1939; directed by Clarence Brown), with Myrna Loy, Tyrone Power, and George Brent; and "The Baroness and the Butler" (1938; Walter Lang), with Annabella, William Powell, and Helen Westley.
March 8-9: "The Great Ziegfeld" (1936; Robert Z. Leonard), with Luise Rainer, William Powell, and Myrna Loy.
March 10-12: "Love Crazy" (1941; Jack Conway), with Myrna Loy and William Powell; and "Another Thin Man" (†).
March 13-14: "Life with Father" (†); and "To Mary—With Love" (1936; John Cromwell), with Myrna Loy, Warner Baxter, and Claire Trevor.
March 15-16: "I Love You Again" (†); and "Rendezvous" (1935; William K. Howard), with Rosalind Russell and William Powell.

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
Through March 8: "Harold and Maude" (1971; Hal Ashby), with Ruth Gordon and Bud Cort; and "Being There" (1979; Hal Ashby), with Peter Sellers, Shirley MacLaine, Melvyn Douglas, and Jack Warden.
March 9-10: "Reds" (1981; Warren Beatty), with Beatty, Diane Keaton, Jack Nicholson, and Maureen Stapleton.
March 11-12: "Down by Law" (1986; Jim Jarmusch), with Tom Waits, John Lurie, and Roberto Benigni; and "She's Gotta Have It" (1986; Spike Lee), with Tracy Camila Johns, Tommy Redmond Hicks, John Canada Terrell, and Lee.
March 13: "L'Argent" (1984; Robert Bresson; in French); and "Diary of a Country Priest" (†).
March 14-15: "Swimming to Cambodia" (1987; Jonathan Demme), with Spalding Gray; and "Home of the Brave" (1986; Laurie Anderson), with Anderson.
From March 16: "Man Facing Southeast" (1987; Eliseo Subiela, an Argentine film, in Spanish); and "Kiss of the Spider Woman" (1985; Hector Babenco), with William Hurt and Raul Julia.

Film Forum 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
March 7: "The Last Movie" (1971; Dennis Hopper), with Hopper; "The American Dreamer" (1971; L. M. Kit Carson and Lawrence Schiller), with Dennis Hopper; and "Dennis Hopper: Some Kind of Genius" (1987; Paul Joyce), a documentary.
March 8-9: "Key Witness" (1960; Phil Karlson), with Jeffrey Hunter, Pat Crowley, and Dennis Hopper; "The Sons of Katie Elder" (1965; Henry Hathaway), with John Wayne, Dean Martin, Martha Hyer, and Dennis Hopper; and "Dennis Hopper: Some Kind of Genius."
March 10-11: "The American Friend" (1977; Wim Wenders), with Dennis Hopper and Bruno Ganz; "Rebel Without a Cause" (†); and "Dennis Hopper: Some Kind of Genius."
March 12-14: "Out of the Blue" (1980; Dennis Hopper), with Linda Manz, Hopper, Sharon Farrell, and Raymond Burr; "Blue Velvet" (1986; David Lynch), with Kyle MacLachlan, Isabella Rossellini, Dennis Hopper, and Laura Dern; and "Dennis Hopper: Some Kind of Genius."
March 15: "Tracks" (1976; Henry Jaglom), with Dennis Hopper, Taryn Power, Dean Stockwell, and Topo Swope; "River's Edge" (1987; Tim Hunter), with Daniel Roebuck, Crispin Glover, Dennis Hopper, and Joshua Miller; and "Dennis Hopper: Some Kind of Genius."
From March 16: "Night Tide" (1964; Curtis Harrington), with Dennis Hopper; and "Queen of Blood" (1966; Curtis Harrington), with Basil Rathbone and Dennis Hopper.

Thalia SoHo, 15 Vandam St. (675-0498)
March 7: "China Gate" (1957; Samuel Fuller), with Nat King Cole, Gene Barry, and Angie Dickinson; and "The Crimson Kimono" (1959; Samuel Fuller), with Victoria Shaw, Glenn Corbett, and James Shigeta.
March 8: "Colonel Redl" (1985; István Szabó; in German), with Klaus Maria Brandauer; and "My Way Home" (1964; Miklós Jancsó; in Hungarian).
March 9: "Lord Love a Duck" (1966; George Axelrod), with Tuesday Weld and Roddy McDowall; and "The Loved One" (1965; Tony Richardson), with Robert Morse.
March 10: "The 47 Ronin" (1942; Kenji Mizoguchi; in Japanese).
March 11-12: "Round Midnight" (1986; Bertrand Tavernier), with Dexter Gordon; and "Paris Blues" (1961; Martin Ritt), with Paul Newman, Joanne Woodward, Sidney Poitier, and Diahann Carroll.
March 13: "Elevator to the Gallows" ("Frantic;" 1957; Louis Malle; in French), with Jeanne Moreau; and "The Lovers" (1959; Louis Malle; in French), with Jeanne Moreau.
March 14: "His Girl Friday" (1940; Howard Hawks), with Rosalind Russell, Cary Grant, and Ralph Bellamy; and "My Man Godfrey" (1936; Gregory La Cava), with Carole Lombard, William Powell, Mischa Auer, and Alice Brady.
March 15: "Rififi" (1955; Jules Dassin; in French), with Jean Servais; and "Only the Cool" (1972; Jean Delannoy).
March 16: "Cat People" (1942; Jacques Tourneur), with Simone Simon, Kent Smith, and Tom Conway; and "The Curse of the Cat People" (1944; Gunther Von Fritsch and Robert Wise), with Simone Simon, Kent Smith, and Ann Carter.

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)
March 7: "Wild Strawberries" (1957; Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish), with Victor Sjöström and Ingrid Thulin; and "Shame" (1968; Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish), with Liv Ullmann, Max von Sydow, and Gunnar Björnstrand.
March 8: "Sherlock Holmes and the Secret Weapon" (1943) and "The Woman in Green" (1945), two films in the Basil Rathbone–Nigel Bruce Holmes–Watson series, both directed by Roy William Neill.
March 9: "Scarlet Street" (1946; Fritz Lang), with Joan Bennett, Edward G. Robinson,



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FATHER
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and Dan Duryea; and "Man Hunt" (1941; Fritz Lang), with Joan Bennett, Walter Pidgeon, George Sanders, and John Carradine.

March 10: "The Southerner" (†); and "The River" (1951; Jean Renoir), with Nora Swinburne and Arthur Shields.

March 11-12: "Roman Holiday" (†) and "Breakfast at Tiffany's" (†).

March 13: "La Dolce Vita" (1960; Federico Fellini; in Italian), with Marcello Mastroianni and Anita Ekberg.

March 14: "Kagemusha" ("The Shadow Warrior;" 1980; Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese), with Tatsuya Nakadai; and "Yojimbo" (1961; Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese), with Toshiro Mifune.

March 15: "Mr. Moto's Last Warning" (1939; Norman Foster), with Peter Lorre, Ricardo Cortez, Virginia Field, and John Carradine; and "Mr. Wong, Detective" (1938; William Nigh), with Boris Karloff and Grant Withers.

March 16: "True Confession" (†) and "We're Not Dressing" (†).

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490; a limited number of tickets are available to those applying for them in person at the museum after 11 on the day of the showing.)

THEATRE 1: March 7-8 and March 10 at 2:30 and 6: Films nominated for the 1987 Academy Award for Best Documentary, Feature-Length. . . . ¶ From March 11: See listings under "Film Society of Lincoln Center."

THEATRE 2: March 8 at 6:30: "Il Deserto dei Tartari" (1976; directed by Valerio Zurlini; in Italian, with English subtitles), with Vittorio Gassman. . . . ¶ From March 11: See listings under "Film Society of Lincoln Center."

FILM SOCIETY OF LINCOLN CENTER (AT MOMA)—The first programs in a seventeen-day festival of new films by new directors. March 11 at 6: "Who Killed Vincent Chin?" (United States; Christine Choy and Renee Tajima). . . . ¶ March 11 at 8:30 and March 12 at 1: "Wedding in Galilee" (Belgium/France; Michel Khleifi). . . . ¶ March 12 at 3:30: "Who Killed Vincent Chin?". . . ¶ March 12 at 6: "No Applause, Just Throw Money" (United States; Karen Goodman) and "Call Me Madame" (France; Françoise Romand). . . . ¶ March 12 at 8:30 and March 13 at 1: "The Great Race" (Poland; Jerzy Domaradzki). . . . ¶ March 13 at 3:30: "No Applause, Just Throw Money" and "Call Me Madame." . . . ¶ March 13 at 6: "The Case of Herman the Stoker" (Poland; Karol Irzykowski) and "Sunday Pranks" (Poland; Robert Glinski). . . . ¶ March 13 at 8:30 and March 14 at 6: "Keeping Love Alive" (Great Britain; Stephen Garrett and David Robinson). . . . ¶ March 14 at 8:30: "The Case of Herman the Stoker" and "Sunday Pranks." . . . ¶ March 15 at 6: "The Big Parade" (People's Republic of China; Chen Kaige). . . . ¶ March 15 at 8:30 and March 16 at 6: "The Emperor's Naked Army Marches On" (Japan; Kazuo Hara). . . . ¶ March 16 at 8:30: "The Big Parade." (Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. 708-9500.)

MUSEUM OF BROADCASTING, 1 E. 53rd St. (752-7684)—"WNET Thirteen: 25 Years on the Air," over a hundred hours of news, public affairs, documentary, music, dance, theatre, nature, science, and children's programming. The first section, featuring news, public affairs, and documentaries, is on view through March 19. The schedule of performances is complicated; our best advice is to phone the museum for titles, schedules, and ticket information. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

COLLECTIVE FOR LIVING CINEMA, 41 White St. (925-2111)—March 7 at 8: "An Autumn Afternoon" (1962; Yasujiro Ozu; in Japanese, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ March 8 at 8: "The Ladies Man" (1961; Jerry Lewis), with Lewis. . . . ¶ March 9 at 8: "Nazarin" (1958; Luis Buñuel; a Mexican film, in Spanish). . . . ¶ March 10 at 8: A program of gay and lesbian experimental films. . . . ¶ March 11 at 8: A program of videotapes by Ken Brown. . . . ¶ March 12 at 8: A program of award-winning and honorable-mention films from the Thomas A. Edison/Black Maria Film Festival in New Jersey. . . . ¶ March 13 at 6: "Marianne and Julianne" (1981; Margarethe von Trotta; in German, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ March 13 at 8 "Journeys from Berlin/1971" (1980; Yvonne Rainer). . . . ¶ March 14 at 8: "The Story of the Last Chrysanthemum" (1939; Kenji Mizoguchi; in Japanese, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ March 15 at 8: "Million Dollar Legs" (1932; Eddie Cline), with W. C. Fields, Jack Oakie, and Ben Turpin; "The Discovery of the Phonograph" (1986; Stuart Sherman); and "Bleu Shut" (Robert Nelson).

PLAYS INTO FILM: THE PLAYWRIGHT'S PERSPECTIVE—A series of films and lectures. March 10 at 8: "Amadeus" (1984; Miloš Forman), with F. Murray Abraham and Tom Hulce. Peter Shaffer, the playwright, will be present. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100).

ZORINA AND BALANCHINE: THE MOVIE YEARS—The first in a series of four films choreographed by George Balanchine, starring Vera Zorina. March 15 at 8: "The Goldwyn Follies" (1938; George Marshall). (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. 570-3949.)

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

(Unsigned notes are by Pauline Kael; others are by Terrence Rafferty.)

ANNA—Sally Kirkland plays a Czech actress named Anna Radkova—once her country's leading film star, during the brief period of cultural freedom that ended in 1968, and now, in her forties, just another struggling actress in New York, desperate enough to take a job understudying all seven roles in an Off Broadway show. The conceit of the movie is that Anna has a kind of understudy in her own life, a lovely Czech country girl (played by the model Paulina Porizkova), who moves in with her and effortlessly achieves all the American-style success that has eluded the older woman. The script (by Agnieszka Holland, from a story by Holland and the director, Yurek Bogayevicz) occasionally suggests some sort of meditation on history and identity, though for the most part the film is content to be a vehicle for Kirkland, who laughs, cries, etc., in an accent that Meryl Streep would be proud of.—T.R. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; through March 10.)

ANOTHER THIN MAN (1939)—The third in the series, and without any new ideas except a bad one: still airily casual, Nick and Nora Charles (William Powell and Myrna Loy) are now the parents of a baby boy. The plot involves a weekend at the estate of an explosives manufacturer (C. Aubrey Smith) who expects Sheldon Leonard (looking very young and sleek) to kill him. The film is dispiriting, but a lot of amusingly familiar faces turn up, among them Otto Kruger, Ruth Hussey, Marjorie Main, and, of course, Asta. Directed by W. S. Van Dyke. (Biograph Cinema; March 10-12.)

AU REVOIR LES ENFANTS (GOODBYE, CHILDREN)—It's set in Occupied France in 1944, when the writer-director Louis Malle was an eleven-year-old at a Catholic boys' boarding school near Fontainebleau that sheltered several Jewish boys. The Gestapo learned they were there, and sent the ones they found to Auschwitz, and the headmaster to a work camp. One of the Jewish boys was in Malle's class, but Malle didn't get to know him well and didn't realize that he was Jewish. For the dramatic purposes of the movie, he has conceived a close friendship between his alter ego, the fair-haired Julien Quentin (Gaspard Manesse), and the dark boy who is using the false name Jean Bonnet (Raphaël Fejtö). But nothing comes into clear focus—not the boy's attitudes, not even the images. The film (especially the first half) seems padded, formal, discreet. It's like watching a faded French classic. And there's something unseemly about the way Jean is used as an aesthetic object—spiritual, sensitive, exotic. With Francine Racette as Julien's mother and François Négret as the informer. In French. (Reviewed in our issue of 2/22/88.) (Cinema I.)

BREAKFAST AT TIFFANY'S (1961)—Audrey Hepburn's Holly Golightly is a tad refined for a girl who lives so improvisationally (on the money men give her), but for about the first three-quarters of an hour this picture, directed by Blake Edwards, has a fair amount of sophisticated slapstick comedy. If you've read the Truman Capote novella that the movie is based on (and even if you haven't), you may be dismayed to see things go soft and romantic. The film wanders, and Hepburn is forced to become too frail and too enchantingly raffish before it comes to its makeshift, fairy-tale end. The cast includes George Peppard, Patricia Neal, Mickey Rooney, and Buddy Ebsen. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; March 11-12.)

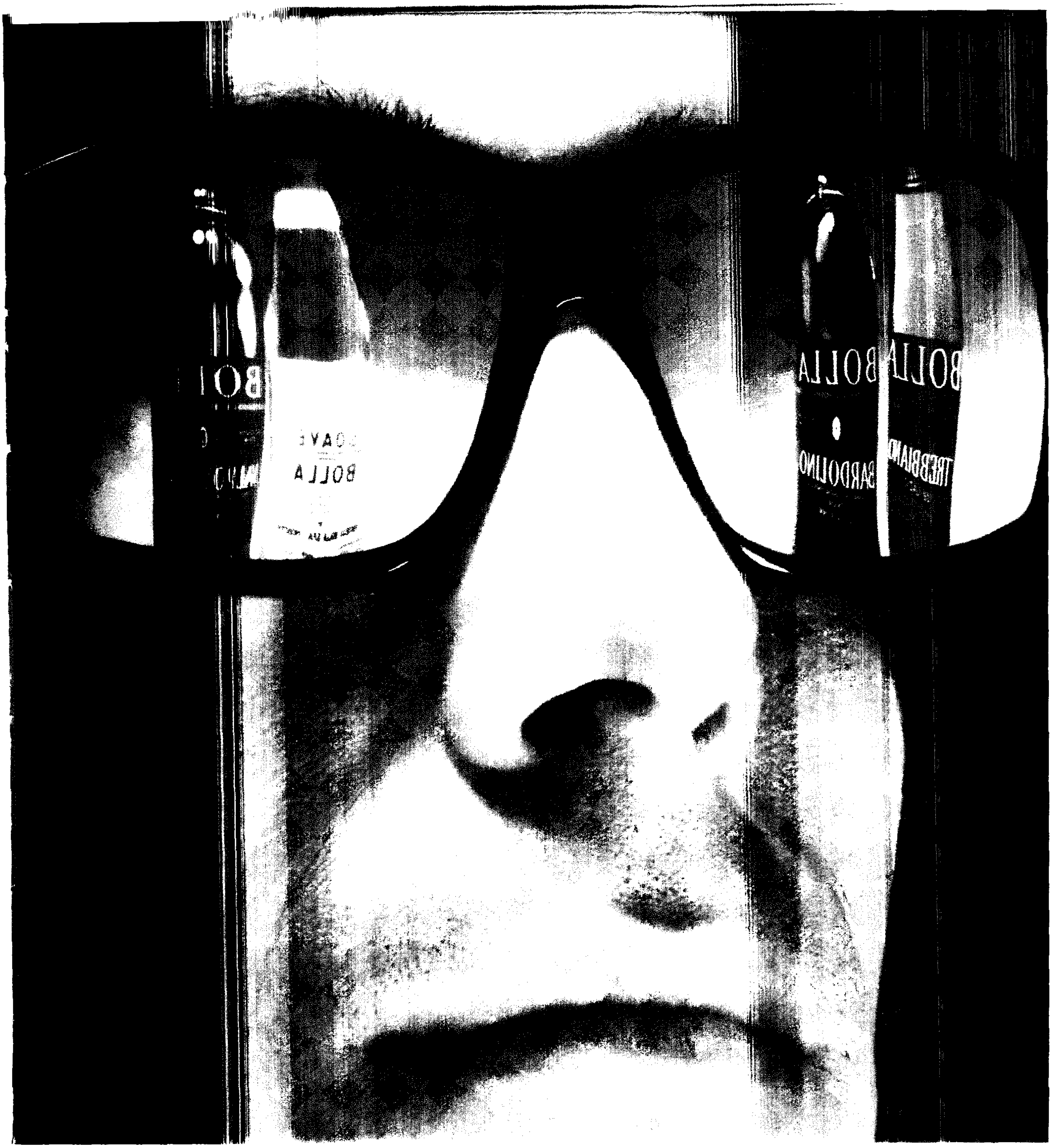
BROADCAST NEWS—The writer-producer-director James L. Brooks puts us inside the world of a network's Washington bureau and sets up an adversarial relationship between the reddish-blond charmer Tom (William Hurt), who represents TV's corruption of the news into entertainment, and dark, broody Aaron (Albert Brooks), a near-genius newsman who, on the surface, at least, represents substance and integrity. The heroine, Jane (Holly Hunter), is a producer, and she and Aaron are supposed to be high-principled professionals, as well as close friends. The satirical, romantic-comedy dilemma is that Jane finds herself falling in love with Tom, who incarnates everything that she despises. Basically all the picture is saying is that beautiful, assured people have an edge over the rest of us, no matter how high our I.Q.s are. And it lacks any filmmaking excitement. With all the surface authenticity Jim Brooks gives us, he himself represents the corruption of movies into TV. (1/11/88) (Gramercy, Coronet, and Embassy 72nd St.)

CÉSAR (1936)—The last film of the Marcel Pagnol trilogy (after "Marius" and "Fanny") is named for the pivotal character, played by Raimu. César, the proprietor of a waterfront bar—and the soul of the trilogy—is the father of Marius (Pierre Fresnay), who runs off to sea, leaving his fiancée, Fanny (Orane Démazis), pregnant. She marries the kind middle-aged sailmaker, Panisse (Charpin). In this concluding film—the only one of the three actually directed by Pagnol—Marius and Fanny are, at last, reunited. Pagnol wrote the story for the stage in the twenties, and, despite the Marseilles setting, the films are very literal-minded and constricted. But the actors redeem much of the pedestrian filmmaking. In French. (Public Theatre; March 11-13 and March 15.)

THE DEAD—Working in a mood of tranquil exuberance, the eighty-year-old John Huston made a great warm, funny movie out of the great story that James Joyce wrote at twenty-five. Huston never before blended his actors so intuitively, so musically. The party that the Morkan sisters and their fortyish niece give in their Dublin town house on January 6, 1904, the Feast of the Epiphany, suggests the Chekhov production of your dreams, or maybe one of Satyajit Ray's triumphs. The cast is glorious: Donal McCann is Gabriel; Anjelica Huston is Gabriel's wife, Gretta; Donal Donnelly is Freddy; Marie Kean is Freddy's mother; Cathleen Delany is Aunt Julia; Helena Carroll is Aunt Kate; Ingrid Craigie is Mary Jane; Dan O'Herlihy is the Protestant Mr. Browne; and Frank Patterson is the tenor who sings "The Lass of Aughrim." Screenplay by Tony Huston; cinematography by Fred Murphy; score by Alex North. (12/14/87) (Quad Cinema, and Festival. . . . ¶ Metro Cinema; through March 10.)

DIARY OF A COUNTRY PRIEST (1950)—Robert Bresson's masterly adaptation of the Georges Bernanos novel about the suffering of a young priest (Claude Laydu) whose faith is neither understood nor accepted by his parishioners. A film of great purity and, at the end, a Bach-like intensity. This is one of the few modern works in any art form that help one to understand the religious life—which for this useless young man is a terrible one, yet with moments of holiness. With Nicole Maurey and Nicole Ladmiral. In French. (Cinema Village; March 13.)

EMPIRE OF THE SUN—At the outset, this Steven Spielberg epic is so big and majestic you want to laugh in pleasure, and it stays that



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way for about forty-five minutes—Spielberg takes over Shanghai, and makes it his city. But then, first in brief patches and then in longer ones, his directing goes terribly wrong. The story, taken from J. G. Ballard's autobiographical novel, is set at the outbreak of the Second World War, and it's about Jim (Christian Bale), an eleven-year-old British schoolboy, who is separated from his parents when the Japanese Army invades the city, on December 8, 1941, and how he changes in order to survive three years of starving in a prison camp. It isn't told straightforwardly, though. Spielberg throws himself into bravura passages, lingers over them trying to give them a poetic obsessiveness, and loses his grasp of the narrative. For the sake of emotion—to have something to say, to give the picture some meaning—he pumps it full of false emotion. (That's what his poetry is.) John Williams' editorializing music swells and swooshes, trying to make you feel that something religious is going on. Christian Bale is a fine performer, directed superlatively; also with John Malkovich, Miranda Richardson, Nigel Havers, and Joe Pantoliano. The adaptation is credited to Tom Stoppard (it was also worked on by Menno Meyjes); the cinematography is by Allen Daviau. Spielberg had permission to shoot in Shanghai for only three weeks; the settings were matched up and constructed in Spain and London. 2 hours and 33 minutes. (12/28/87) (Plaza; through March 10.)

The Family—Ettore Scola's chronicle of a Roman middle-class family from 1906 to 1986 uses formal gimmicks to disguise its lack of substance. The film's nine episodes take place at precise ten-year intervals; both the first episode and the last involve the taking of a group photograph; and all the action is set in the family's spacious apartment. Scola and his co-scenarists (Ruggero Maccari and Furio Scarpelli) work the dull middle ground of human experience—amazingly little happens to any of this family's dozens of members—but the story's uneventfulness doesn't really mean anything, either. The filmmakers seem to be aiming for the blandest kind of universality. If we didn't know better, we'd swear that this fussy, empty movie had been made to demonstrate the decadence of bourgeois filmmaking, European style. With Vittorio Gassman, Fanny Ardant, Stefania Sandrelli, Andrea Occhipinti, Jo Ciampa, and, in a cameo, Philippe Noiret. In Italian.—T.R. (Quad Cinema.)

Fatal Attraction—A primer on the bad things that can happen if a man cheats on his wife. There's sometimes a fine line between sexiness and craziness, and the hero (Michael Douglas), a Manhattan corporate lawyer—a settled married man—isn't hip enough to catch the danger signals when he lets a woman book editor (Glenn Close) talk him into going with her to her loft. Once this woman begins behaving as if she had a right to a share in the lawyer's life, she becomes the dreaded lunatic of horror movies. But with a difference: she parrots the aggressively angry, self-righteous statements that have become commonplaces of feminist fiction, and they're so inappropriate to the circumstances that they're the proof she's loco. They're also the director Adrian Lyne's and the screenwriter James Dearden's hostile version of feminism. Basically, this is a gross-out slasher movie in a glossy format, and it enforces conventional morality (in the era of AIDS) by piling fear on paranoiac fear. With Anne Archer as the beautiful homebody wife, Ellen Hamilton Latzen as the bright little daughter, and Stuart Pankin as the clowning pal. Tip-top editing by Michael Kahn and Peter E. Berger. (10/19/87) (Embassy. . . . ¶ Loews 34th Street Showplace; through March 10.)

Good Morning, Vietnam—It sounded like a first-rate idea: Robin Williams doing his manic free-association comedy as a disk jockey, Adrian Cronauer, on Armed Forces Radio in Saigon in 1965. But the picture makes the character out to be a vulnerable, compassionate, respectful-of-the-Vietnamese wonderful guy, and the director, Barry Levinson, has a numbing sense of rhythm. Williams' riffs are chopped short, and the film keeps cutting to soldiers breaking up over his spiel before it's out of his mouth. There is an Adrian Cronauer, and the movie is very loosely based on his exploits, but the way the story line (from the script by Mitch Markowitz) has been directed it's a clumsier version of the plots of fifties musicals. (1/11/88) (Cinema II, Art Greenwich Twin, Ziegfeld, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex. . . . ¶ Bay Cinema; through March 10.)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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Hairspray—The writer-director John Waters treats the message movie as a genre to be parodied, just like the teenpic. Combining the two, he comes up with a pop dadaist musical comedy, set in Baltimore in 1962. Waters loves narrative, and he has half a dozen plots crisscrossing each other. In the middle are the spherical Mrs. Edna Turnblad (played by the male actor Divine) and her baby-blimp daughter, Tracy (Ricki Lake); they wear matching mother-and-daughter outfits. Tracy, who's the newest teen-age dancer on "The Corny Collins Show," discovers that black kids aren't allowed to take part and she becomes a leader in the fight for integration. Meanwhile, Divine watches over Tracy and preens like a mother hen. There's a what-the-hell quality to Divine's acting which the film needs; it would be too close to a real teenpic without it. When Divine's Edna Turnblad is onscreen in the sleeveless dresses she's partial to, the movie has something like the lunacy of a W. C. Fields in drag. With Colleen Fitzpatrick as Tracy's bitchy rival Amber, Leslie Ann Powers as shy Penny, and Michael St. Gerard, Clayton Prince, Ruth Brown, Debbie Harry, Sonny Bono, Jerry Stiller, Shawn Thompson, Ric Ocasek, Pia Zadora, Jo Ann Havrilla, and Waters himself as a sicko psychiatrist. (3/7/88) (Waverly, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy. . . . ¶ Loews New York Twin; through March 10.)

High Tide—This is a woman's picture in the way that "Stella Dallas" was—it's about the mother-daughter bond. But it's also a woman's picture in a new way: the Australian director Gillian Armstrong has the technique and the assurance to put a woman's fluid, not fully articulated emotions right onto the screen. And she has an actress—Judy Davis—who's a genius at moods. As one of three backup singers for a touring Elvis imitator, Judy Davis is contemptuous of the cruddy act, contemptuous of herself. Feeling put down, the dumb-lug Elvis fires her, and she's left alone at the beginning of winter in a ramshackle beach town on the magnificent, windswept coast of New South Wales. There she encounters her lonely teen-age daughter (Claudia Karvan), whom she'd given up to her confident, belligerent mother-in-law (Jan Adele) thirteen years earlier. A great many young women are likely to feel that this is the movie they've wanted to make. The script is by Laura Jones; the superb cinematography is by Russell Boyd, who was also the camera operator; the stunningly effective editing is by Nick Beauman. With Colin Friels, Bob Purtell, John Clayton, and Mark Hembrow. (2/22/88) (Lincoln Plaza.)

Hope and Glory—A great comedy about the blitz. In this autobiographical film, the writer-director John Boorman has had the inspiration to desentimentalize wartime England and show us the Second World War the way he saw it as an eight-year-old—as a party that kept going day after day, night after night. Boorman lets his characters say the previously unsayable. Bored with crouching indoors during the nightly raids by the Luftwaffe, the dimply blond fifteen-year-old Dawn (Sammi Davis), the eldest of the three Rohan children, runs outside, watches the firefighters at work on a blazing house, and dances in the Rohans' postage-stamp-size front garden. "It's lovely!" she calls out. The large cast includes Sebastian Rice Edwards as the eight-year-old Bill, Geraldine Muir as his little sister, Sarah Miles as his mother, David Hayman as his father, Ian Bannen as his grandfather, and Susan Wooldridge, Derrick O'Connor, and Jean-Marc Barr as the Canadian jokester. (10/5/87) (Quad Cinema. . . . ¶ Eastside Cinema; through March 10.)

LETTERS
ALL VISITORS MUST BE ANNOUNCED

I Love You Again (1940)—Bum title but surprisingly lively comedy. William Powell is the slick con man who awakes from a nine-year bout of amnesia to discover (with horror) that he has settled down to a job, married Myrna Loy, joined the Elks, and taken to wearing a straw hat. W. S. Van Dyke directed. With Frank McHugh and Edmund Lowe. (Biograph Cinema; March 15-16.)

Jean de Florette—The setting is Provence in the early nineteen-twenties. As the hunchback Jean de Florette, an educated, nature-loving city fellow who has learned about farming from books, Gérard Depardieu wears "GOOD MAN" in capital letters across his wide brow; in smaller letters we can read "He has poetry in his soul." Jean has a devoted wife (Elisabeth Depardieu), who used to sing in opera, and a delicate little daughter named Manon. And for slightly over two hours we watch him trudge across the land he has inherited hauling two barrels of water that are fastened across his hump. When there's no rain, his plants shrivel and his rabbits die, and it's agonizing for us, because we know that there's a spring of fresh mountain water on the land. His neighbors—the prosperous, greedy old peasant César Soubeyran (Yves Montand) and César's dull-witted nephew, Ugolin (Daniel Auteuil)—have hidden the spring under a load of cement, so that Jean will be forced to sell out to them. Adapted from the first volume of Marcel Pagnol's two-part novel "The Water of the Hills," published in 1963 (it was derived from a picture he made in 1952). The story of Jean de Florette is completed in the film "Manon of the Spring" (see below). The director, Claude Berri, who did the adaptation with Gérard Brach, aimed for fidelity to the novel; he has said that it was his task to give the material "a cinematic rhythm," but "there was no need for imagination." That's what *he* thinks. In French. (7/13/87) (Bleecker St. Cinema, and Cinema 3.)

The Last Emperor—Bernardo Bertolucci tells the story of Pu Yi, who was not quite three when, in 1908, he was set on the Dragon Throne in Peking's Forbidden City and became the titular ruler of a third of the people on earth. After being deposed and then enthroned again in Japanese-occupied Manchuria, he was in Soviet custody for five years, and then spent ten years being "reëducated" in a Chinese war-criminals prison. The movie doesn't have the juicy absurdity that seems to pour right out of the historical story. And it suppresses the drama. But it has pictorial grace and a dull fascination. Bertolucci presents Pu Yi (John Lone) as a man without will or backbone who lives his life as spectacle—who watches his life go by. And so we're given a historical pageant without a protagonist. There's an idea here, but it's a dippy idea—it results in a passive movie. With Joan Chen and Peter O'Toole. Cinematography by Vittorio Storaro; the film shows the palaces and courtyards of the two-hundred-and-fifty-acre Forbidden City. 2 hours and 46 minutes. (11/30/87) (8th St. Playhouse, 57th St. Playhouse, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex.)

Life with Father (1947)—The director, Michael Curtiz, seems to be totally out of his element in this careful, deadly version of the celebrat-

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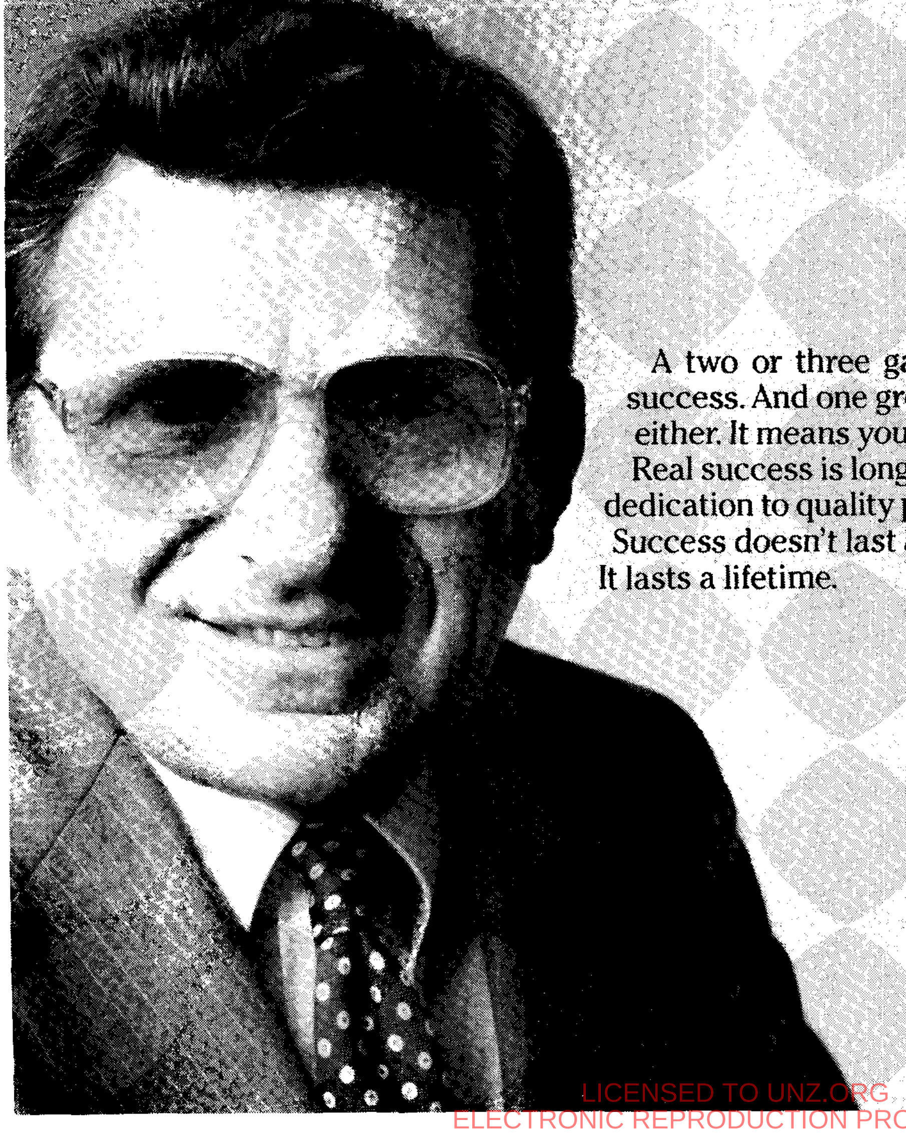

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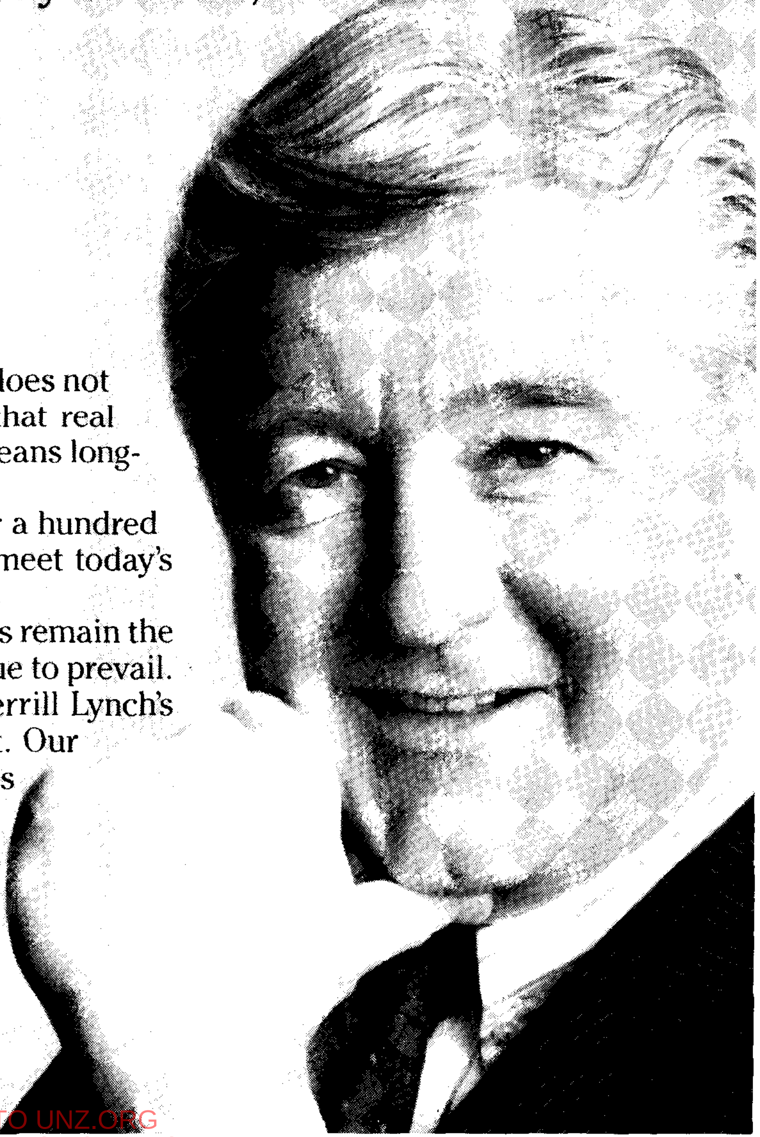

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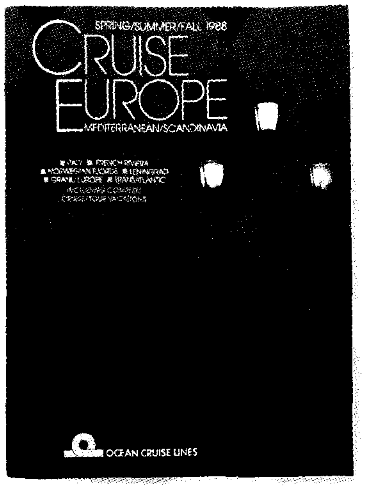

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ed long-running Broadway comedy by Howard Lindsay and Russel Crouse, based on Clarence Day's stories. William Powell plays the crotchety head of a large, tumultuous upper-middle-class New York household in the eighteen-eighties; Powell's timing (usually impeccable) is way off, and the comic expressions freeze on his face. Everybody seems to be trying too hard. With Irene Dunne, Elizabeth Taylor, Edmund Gwenn, Jimmy Lydon, Martin Milner, and ZaSu Pitts. (Biograph Cinema; March 13-14.)

Manon of the Spring—Will Fate settle the hash of César Soubeyran (Yves Montand) and his cretinous nephew, Ugolin (Daniel Auteuil), the Provençal farmers whose treachery caused the death of gentle, hunchbacked Jean de Florette? Of course it will. To keep us awake while we're waiting for the inevitable, this concluding half of Claude Berri's adaptation of the Marcel Pagnol novel "The Water of the Hills" serves up pretty much the same menu as "Jean de Florette" (see above): changing seasons (exquisitely shot by Bruno Nuytten), Montand looking sly, Auteuil gaping, wiry peasants and fat shopkeepers shouting at each other over bottles of vin ordinaire. With Emmanuelle Béart. Screenplay by Berri and Gérard Brach, with a credit for original dialogue by Pagnol. In French. —T.R. (Bleecker St. Cinema, and Cinema 3.)

A Month in the Country—Pat O'Connor's film, based on a novel by J. L. Carr, is intelligent and scrupulously made, but it never comes to life. Set in Yorkshire just after the First World War, it's about several kinds of restoration: A young veteran named Birkin (Colin Firth), emotionally blasted by the war, accepts a commission from a small country church to uncover a long-neglected mural by an unknown medieval artist. In the process of restoring this odd, apocalyptic tableau—a disturbing vision that the young man finds himself identifying with—Birkin somehow returns to a semblance of his prewar self: his stuttering and twitches gradually disappear. The themes are impeccably worked out in the script (by the playwright Simon Gray), though in ways that seem at odds with the story's emotional core. "A Month in the Country" is an attempt to restore something, too—the serene confidence of well-made nineteenth-century fiction—but the project has no conviction. After the Great War (as the film reminds us), a generation of Englishmen said goodbye to all that, and the filmmakers' very literary reaffirmation of faith feels hollow, wishful, even a little glib. The cast includes Kenneth Branagh, Patrick Malahide, and the wonderful Natasha Richardson. —T.R. (68th St. Playhouse.)

Moonstruck—A rose-tinted black comedy, with its own special lushness. Cher is devastatingly funny and sinuous and beautiful as a widowed bookkeeper who lives with her Italian-American family in a big old brownstone in Brooklyn. When the bookkeeper and her fiancé's brother, a baker (Nicolas Cage), start lusting for one another, a fairy-tale full moon lights up the movie. And when you see that the whole cast of family members are involved in libidinal confusions the opera-buffa structure can make you feel close to deliriously happy. Cage is a wonderful romantic clown: he can look stupefied while he smolders. And the director, Norman Jewison, working from John Patrick Shanley's script, stylizes the ethnic performances given by the husky-voiced Olympia Dukakis, the great, leering Julie Bovasso, Vincent Gardenia, Danny Aiello, John Mahoney, and Anita Gillette. The picture is slender, but it's an original: its mockery is a giddy homage to our desire for grand passion. (1/25/88) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, Sutton, 86th Street East Twin, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Warner.)

My Life as a Dog—Lasse Hallström's film is a gentle, episodic narrative of a twelve-year-old boy (Anton Glanzelius) growing up in nineteen-fifties Sweden. Ingemar, a lively but sensitive kid, gets passed around from household to household when his mother becomes seriously ill. At its best, the movie is very shrewd about the ways children protect themselves from disorienting, and even traumatic, experiences. Hallström's naïveté as a director gives many of the dramatic scenes a touching straightforwardness. But that same quality sabotages the comic passages with a tone of heavy, self-satisfied whimsy. With Tomas von Brömssen, Anki Liden, Ingmari Carlsson, and Melinda Kinnaman. Screenplay by Hallström, Reidar Jönsson, Brasse Brännstrom, and Per Berglund, from Jönsson's novel. In Swedish —T.R. (Lincoln Plaza.)

Rebel Without a Cause (1955)—As Jim, a high-school boy, James Dean was the archetypal misunderstood teen-ager in this generation-gap soap opera of the fifties, which had more emotional resonance for the teen-agers of the time than many much better movies. With Natalie Wood, Sal Mineo, Corey Allen, Nick Adams, Dennis Hopper, Jim Backus, and Ann Doran. Directed by Nicholas Ray. (Film Forum 2; March 10-11.)

Roman Holiday (1953)—Charming. This is the picture that made Audrey Hepburn a movie star. Probably no one could have brought out her skinny, long-necked gamine magic as winningly as the director William Wyler did. She plays a Central European princess on an official tour of Rome; she flies the royal coop and has her first experiences of freedom with an American reporter (Gregory Peck, who is at his most animated and likable) and his photographer sidekick (Eddie Albert). The plot is banal, and the movie is no more than a Cinderella-style romantic comedy, but it is enough. With Harcourt Williams, Hartley Power, Margaret Rawlings, and Tullio Carminati. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; March 11-12.)

Sammy and Rosie Get Laid—This second film by the director Stephen Frears and the writer Hanif Kureishi, who made "My Beautiful Laundrette," has so much going on that it keeps losing track of what it's about. Sammy (Ayub Khan Din) and Rosie (Frances Barber) and their friends are Third World bohemians who live in a decaying, racially mixed part of London. Sammy's father, Rafi (Shashi Kapoor), who was a minister in the repressive government of Pakistan and is fleeing threats on his life, thinks he can return to the courteous, law-abiding England he remembers from thirty years before. He comes from the airport straight into a race riot—the movie is his nightmare experience of the new London. What we see is an apocalyptic carnival that's like street theatre. At times, it's as if Swinging London had come back as a race riot. Made in a documentary manner as stylized as a Hollywood musical, the movie is hyperconscious of art, of politics, of itself, and at times it's exasperatingly affectless. At its best, it's playfully Godardian, as in the sequence with the screen split horizontally and three multiracial couples stretched out on top of each other, and the Ghetto Lites singing a reggae version of "My Girl." There are two marvellous performances: by Kapoor and by Claire Bloom, as a woman he deserted long ago. (11/16/87) (Bleecker St. Cinema.)

Shoot to Kill—Sidney Poitier, appearing onscreen for the first time in eleven years, plays an F.B.I. agent tracking a deranged killer through the Pacific Northwest wilderness. With urban action sequences at the beginning and the end of the picture, "Shoot to Kill" is a cop movie wrapped around a Western—to no particular effect. The screenwriters (Harv Zimmel, Michael Burton, and Daniel Petrie, Jr.) have constructed this story as if they were desperadoes on the run: they'll get from point A to point B any way they can. Roger Spottiswoode, the director, is a hostage to their slapdash, random-killer methods. The action set pieces are superbly staged, but less powerful than they'd be if there were any coherent narrative context for them. Spottiswoode outclasses the material, and so does Poitier: though he doesn't really have a character to play, his quiet authority keeps the movie from seeming as cold and cheesily manipulative as it might have. Also with Tom Berenger, Kirstie Alley, Clancy Brown, and Richard Masur. The excellent cinematography is by Michael Chapman. —T.R. (D. W. Griffith, 23rd St. West Triplex, Regency, and Embassy 1.)

The Southerner (1945)—Jean Renoir's poetic tribute to some of the patterns of American life. It's an account of the year of a poor-white Texas family—a chronicle of seasons and conflicts, adapted from the book "Hold Autumn in Your Hand," by George Sessions Perry. Zachary Scott, who usually played lounge lizards, is almost unrecognizable as a young tenant farmer; it was the performance of his career. Betty Field plays his wife, and his relatives and neighbors include Percy Kilbride, Blanche Yurka, J. Carrol Naish, Norman Lloyd, and Beulah Bondi, who is more than a bit much as Granny. The picture has beautiful, evocative moments, mysteriously solemn. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; March 10.)

True Confession (1937) It rarely turns up, though it's one of the most likably delirious of Carole Lombard's screwball comedies. She plays an extravagant, compulsive liar—a young wife whose confession to a murder fools even her prim lawyer husband (Fred MacMurray). John Barrymore, who had brought out Lombard's slapstick talent in "Twentieth Century," plays an eccentric, tippling criminologist and swipes the picture. The characters of the husband and wife are too simplified and their comic turns too forced, but Barrymore and the general giddiness keep the picture going. Directed by Wesley Ruggles. With Una Merkel and Edgar Kennedy. (Theatre 80 St. Marks. March 16.)

The Unbearable Lightness of Being—Directed by Philip Kaufman, this adaptation of Milan Kundera's novel is touching in sophisticated ways that you don't expect from an American director. A prankish sex comedy, it treats modern political events with a delicate—yet almost sly—sense of tragedy. It's the way the variations of jealousy and erotic attraction are played out by the three principal actors—an Englishman (Daniel Day-Lewis), a Swedish woman (Lena Olin), and a Frenchwoman (Juliette Binoche), all playing Czechs—that gives the movie its wonderfully unresolved texture. The story begins in Prague in 1968, during the period of freedom of expression and artistic flowering known as "socialism with a human face." Day-Lewis's Tomas is a hedonist, a womanizer, and an eminent young brain surgeon; Olin's Sabina, a painter who is his longtime sex partner, and Binoche's Tereza, whom he marries, represent the two poles of his life—lightness and weight. Kaufman has an exuberant temperament, and the spirit of the film is younger and looser than that of the book; a short two hours and fifty-three minutes, the picture has a whirling beauty. With Derek de Lint, Pavel Landovsky, Erland Josephson, and Donald Moffat. Script by Jean-Claude Carrière and Kaufman; editing by Walter Murch; cinematography by Sven Nykvist. (2/8/88) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews Tower East, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex.)

The Untouchables—With Kevin Costner, Robert De Niro, Sean Connery, Andy Garcia, and Charles Martin Smith; directed by Brian De Palma. (6/29/87) (Embassy; through March 8.)

Wall Street—Oliver Stone makes films in the overwrought pulp style of directors like Samuel Fuller and Robert Aldrich. Everything has the hysterically urgent tone of a war movie, and the actors scream their lines as if they were struggling to be heard above the din of artillery fire. Applying his combat-zone sensibility to the financial community, Stone produces some good, weird comedy in the movie's manic first hour, as the young stockbroker hero (Charlie Sheen) claws his way to success by providing inside information to a ruthless corporate raider (Michael Douglas). As the picture goes on, though, the disparity between Stone's complex subject and his melodramatic style becomes less and less entertaining. Repeating the worst idea in "Platoon," he turns the movie into a contest for the young hero's soul, a battle between his decent union-man father (Martin Sheen) and the greedy, reptilian Douglas. The dialogue gets overexplicit, the tone becomes desperately moralistic, and we begin to wonder if Charlie Sheen's soul is really worth all this fuss. (At one point, he steps out onto his balcony and muses aloud, "Who am I?," and the audience has to think a minute: Tom Cruise? Judd Nelson?) Also with Daryl Hannah (cruelly directed), Hal Holbrook, and Terence Stamp.—T.R. (Gotham Cinema. . . . ¶ Movieland 8th Street Triplex, through March 10.)

We're Not Dressing (1934)—Light, easygoing Paramount musical comedy about the wreck of a yacht on a desert island, taken (very loosely) from J. M. Barrie's "The Admirable Crichton." Bing Crosby is the sailor; the spoiled heiress is Carole Lombard. The other passengers are lecherous Ethel Merman (who sings "It's Just an Old Spanish Custom"), and Ray Milland and Leon Errol as rich prigs. The island, fortunately, isn't deserted; Gracie Allen and George Burns turn up, as naturalists living there. Norman Taurog directed. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; March 16.)

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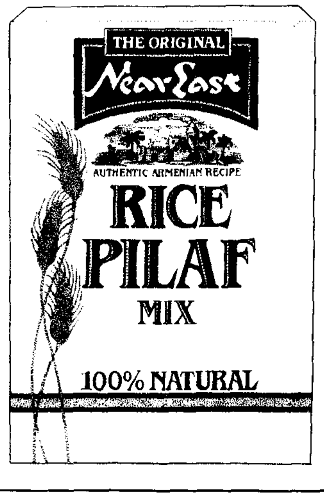

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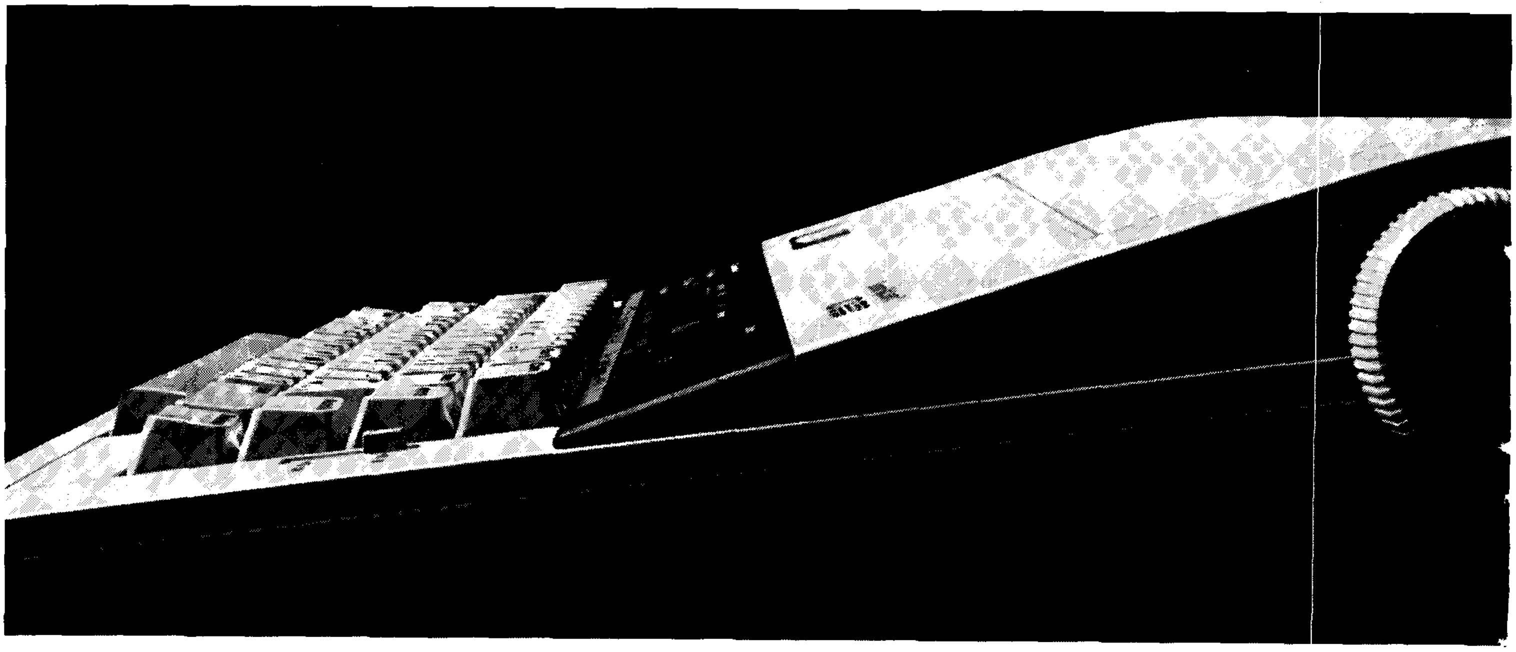

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THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

IN September of 1981, Keith Coleman, the editor of a student newspaper at Witwatersrand University, in Johannesburg, was arrested by the South African police. He was held without charges for five months, most of that time in solitary confinement. Keith's parents, Audrey and Max Coleman, were, of course, frantic. They started meeting with the parents of other political detainees, and those meetings led to the founding of the Detainees' Parents Support Committee. Max Coleman, who was at the time a successful businessman, began to devote so much time to the work of the committee that he ultimately had to withdraw from management of the chemical factory he owned. Dr. Coleman (he has a doctorate in chemical engineering) passed through New York a few months ago. We went to see him at his hotel, and found a serious, precise, extremely friendly man with a thick gray mustache and a deep voice.

"We've come through a couple of different phases," Dr. Coleman told us when we asked about his work. "At first, we concentrated simply on getting food and clothing to those who had been detained. The prisons are hellishly cold, so we try to get them tracksuits. They're the most comfortable form of warm clothing, and the detainees' families often can't afford them. Also, the food is very poor inside. It's mainly porridge, which is often uncooked or full of maggots, with perhaps some fish, which is often inedible, and the schedule is such that the detainees go without any food for sixteen hours each day. My son Neil, who was detained for four months during the 1985 emergency, said that for the first couple of months he was constantly hungry, and he's not one to eat much. Detainees under the emergency provisions can't receive food from outside, but they can receive money, and they can buy biscuits, fruit juices, maybe some chocolate, so we try to help with that. Of course, we're also trying to give detainees a psychological boost. The police can always say to a detainee, 'Tell us what we want to know or we'll just hold you here forever.' And that's a very powerful weapon. People begin to believe that they're just going to rot in there. We've tried to give them a bit more faith that they won't disappear.

"At a certain point, we decided that we could serve more than just a welfare function: we could take action on a political level against detention without trial. We started demonstrating outside police headquarters and outside the Supreme Court. It's illegal in South Africa for more than two people to hold a political demonstration, so one person at a time used to stand out there with a placard saying something like 'For a hundred and fifty days my son has been detained.' We got quite a bit of attention with that, and we eventually got a meeting with the Minister of Law and Order and the commissioner of police. At the meeting, we made certain allegations concerning the torture of detainees. The government's people got very angry about that, and demanded that we supply them with details, which we did. We never heard from them again on the subject, and we've never had another meeting.

"Meanwhile, the conditions under which we work have changed completely. In the early days, a couple of hundred detentions a year would be par for the course. In 1984, that number went up to twelve hundred. Then, in 1985, when we had the first state of emergency, the figure shot up to twelve thousand. And in the year that we've just come through our figure was thirty thousand detentions. So we're now getting into the Argentine league. At our offices, we're constantly running and never catching up."

Dr. Coleman paused to answer the phone. When he hung up, we asked him what else he could tell us about the Support Committee's work.

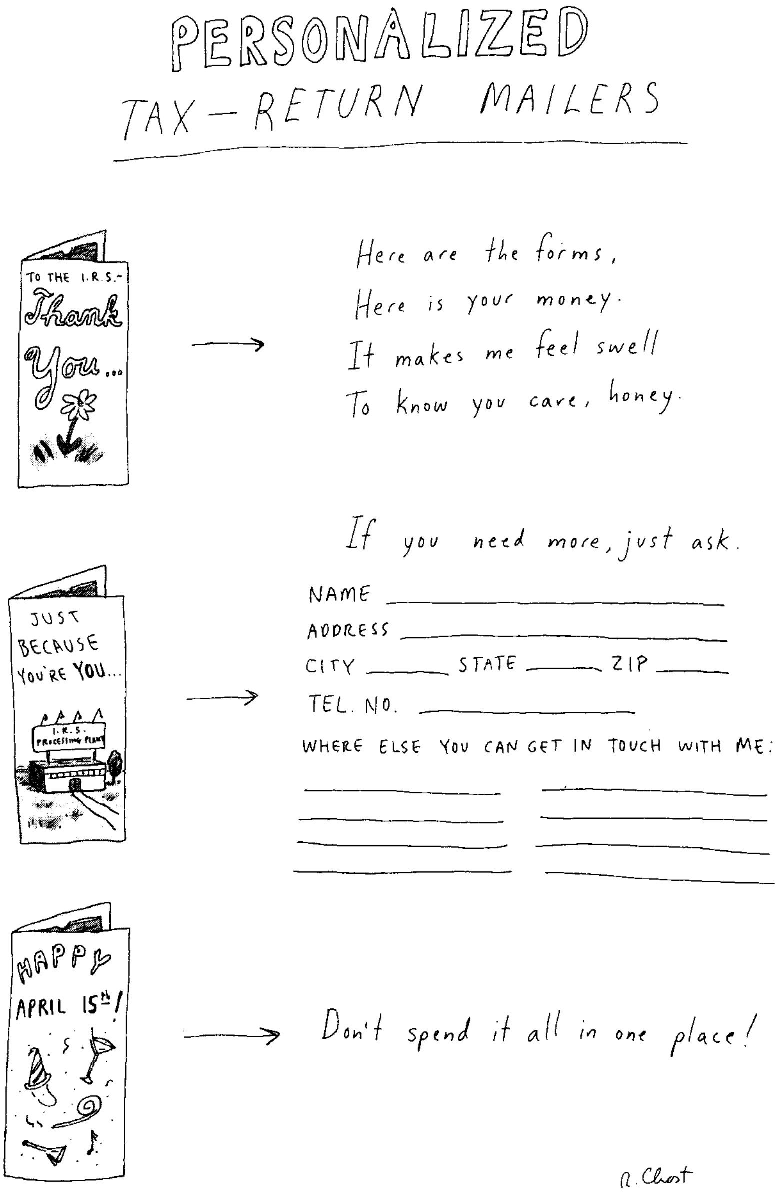
"We try to help families trace their missing ones, and we appoint lawyers, who work without pay in their behalf," he said. "We also help the families find out how to get material assistance when their breadwinners have been taken away. Then, when detainees come out, we record their stories of their detention and pass them on to lawyers if litigation is likely. We quickly get them to doctors. We have a counselling service as well, because there are major psychological consequences of being detained—especially when someone has been in solitary confinement. To readjust to society is often very difficult.

"The children—that's the toughest part. It's really pretty heartbreaking, because the sixteen- and seventeen-year-olds are the main targets of the police. The stories we get from young kids coming in—We've got hundreds of statements on file, about terrible assaults and terrible torture: electric shock, hooding, beating with sjamboks, and so on. As for their parents, one mother whom we see in our offices quite a lot has four children, between the ages of twelve and seventeen, and *all* of them are in detention. Another man had his entire family in detention—his wife and six or seven children—and he just ended his life. He committed suicide."

Dr. Coleman pursed his lips and stopped talking. We asked about the government's attitude toward the Support Committee.

"The state regards us as radicals," he said. "We've had thirty or forty of our people detained during this emergency. We've had raids. In Johannesburg, they raided us on the day that the emergency was declared. They spent three hours in our office, took away a whole lot of documents. Like other organizations, we are prohibited under the emergency from holding meetings. So we sometimes have what we call tea parties, to get around the regulations. These are actually rallying points for a small part of the community. They revive people's spirits. We even do a little bit of dancing and singing."

Late last month, when the South African government abruptly banned the activities of seventeen anti-apartheid organizations, including the Detainees' Parents Support Committee and the country's largest legal opposition group, the United Democratic Front—an umbrella organization, with which the D.P.S.C. is affiliated—we phoned Dr. Coleman in Johannesburg. He was as precise and as friendly as before. "What this means for us, I'm afraid, is that we've had to shut our doors," he said. "If people come to our advice office, we cannot refer them to lawyers, cannot counsel them in any way. That would be an activity. We can no longer render assistance to detainees, and gathering and disseminating information about detainees must stop. We'll contest this ban in court, and we're feeling pretty confident about that, but it could take a long time. I must add, I am speaking to you in my personal capacity. I am not speaking in behalf of D.P.S.C. That would be an activity."



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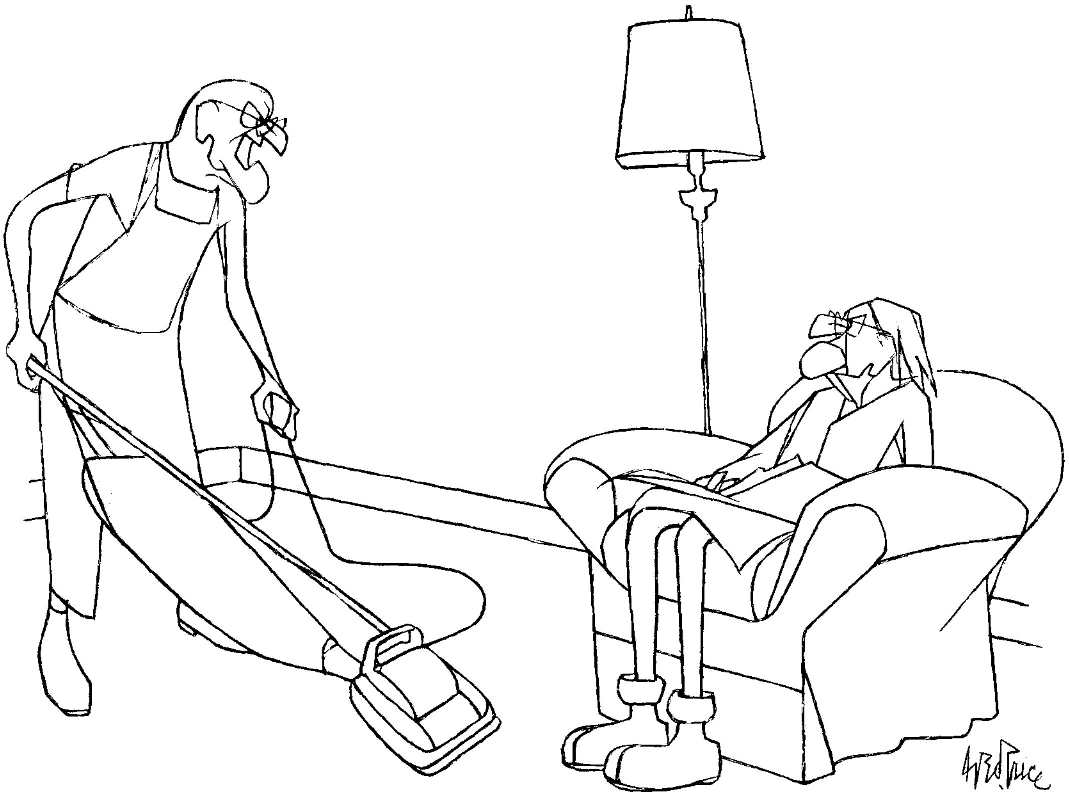
A FRIEND writes:

When I was in my first year of college, in the late seventies, I read one of those books that were popular then, full of dreamy metaphoric connections between Oriental mysticism and quantum theory, and I became infatuated with a poetic notion of what it might be like to be a physicist. I decided to take an introductory physics course. To my surprise, the course turned out to include neither the blackboards covered with intimidating equations I'd feared nor the exchange of deep "insights" into the mysteries of nature I'd dreamed of but was instead a series of screenings of some black-and-white movies. Fifty of us would sit in a dark lecture hall and watch a movie of a guy talking, gesturing with a piece of chalk—it reminded me of grade-school assemblies. Some of the time, you could hardly hear what was being said, the click-clack of the projector was so loud, and the cheap speaker made the soundtrack whine and whoop. Also, the guy doing the talking seemed peculiar—not an oracle but a *shvitzer*, with a voice and manner disconcertingly like Art Carney's. The movies had titles like "The Law of Gravitation" and "The Relation of Mathematics to Physics," and the *shvitzer* with the chalk was the American physicist Richard Feynman, who died last month. I learned pretty quickly that I wasn't going to be a physicist (it turned out that a gift for arithmetic at something higher than the long-division level was called for), but I went back every fall to watch the Feynman films, and I did what I could to share my enthusiasm for this wonderful teacher. (We finally managed to bring him to the college for a series of popular lectures.)

In the last five years or so of his life, Feynman became something of a celebrity, with a best-selling memoir and, of course, the famous televised O-ring experiment before the shuttle commission, and so his passing may have attracted more than the usual attention that a famous scientist receives when he dies. Most of the obituaries suggested that Feynman was a paradox, a double man: on the one hand, the deep explorer of the most esoteric mysteries of nature and, on the other, the sprightly, unpretentious bongo-drum player, monologuist, and practical joker. It seems to me, though, that the key to understanding Feynman, and what remains most striking about his work, was how these two sides of his character became one in his attitude toward science: he demonstrated that the way to get a real sense of the mysteries and beauties of nature was not to wrap them up in "poetry" or fake mysticism but to *describe* them, simply and passionately and comically.

I learned enough physics in that one year to know that the achievement that had won Feynman the 1965 Nobel Prize—the so-called Feynman diagrams of quantum electrodynamic interactions—was something extremely rare among major scientific discov-



“Lift your stems.”

• •

eries in our century. It was a triumph of description—inspired storytelling, really. Before Feynman, most physicists were convinced that the strange ways subatomic particles behave could be grasped only in a series of abstract equations and formulas. Feynman, with his diagrams, found a means of picturing those particles—of describing them in a manner that made their movement not just easier to calculate but as plain (if as tricky) to see as the flight of hummingbirds. And yet, for Feynman, describing things perfectly didn’t make them any less mysterious. I’ll never forget the first of the lectures he gave at my college—on quantum electrodynamics. “What I’m going to describe to you tonight is pretty hard for me to understand in a deep sense,” he said. “So I suppose it may be hard for *you* to understand in a deep sense. By that, I mean that I don’t think that any of us can understand why nature should choose to work in this way. It seems weird. Weird choice. But this happens to be the way that nature has chosen to work, so let me tell you more or less how it goes. Now, electrons in certain ways are like balls.” When he finished speaking, an hour and a half later, all two or three hundred of us scientific ignoramuses in his audience felt that we now understood how quantum electrodynamics basically worked. The next morning, of course, our understanding had diminished a little, and it went on diminishing every morning after that. It didn’t matter: Feynman had let us know that we were capable of knowing.

By the end of his life, with his books and his TV appearances, Feynman may have become as familiar an icon of the scientist as anyone since Einstein. But where Einstein lodged in our collective imagination as a kind of Rembrandt philosopher, Feynman took his place there as a delicatessen skeptic, even a wise guy. There was that in him, surely (and certain people who knew him well have told me that his skepticism could sometimes touch the edge of arrogance, especially when it came to fields like psychology, which he dismissed as “low-level baloney”). But most skeptics and wise guys tend to be skeptical about beauty, too, and Feynman seemed, in a completely unpretentious way, as alight with a sense of order as any aesthete. In his memoirs, among the recountings of his (often adolescent) pranks and antics there is a passage in which he talks about why, late in life, he felt a deep urge to learn to draw: “I wanted to convey an emotion I have about the beauty of the world. It’s difficult to describe because it’s an emotion. . . . It’s an appreciation of the mathematical beauty of nature, of how she works inside; a realization that the phenomena we see result from the complexity of the inner workings between atoms; a feeling of how dramatic and wonderful it is.” To one degree or another, I suspect, all scientists must feel something like this emotion. What was special about Feynman, perhaps, was that this feeling should make him want to draw a picture. Feynman’s legacy to physics will doubtless be immense and complex—something that the experts will have to explain. But his instinct that the way to hook up the dreamer and the wise guy who reside together in everyone is through seeing exactly what a thing is like and then finding the images and the language to enable someone else to see it, too—his sense that making things as plain as day can also make them as sublime as the night sky—may be the legacy of Richard Feynman to us dropouts.

• •

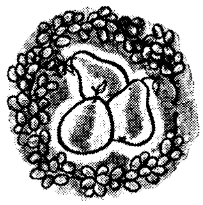
Big Number

WE walked up to Radio City Music Hall last Monday afternoon and watched Michael Jackson hang around for a few hours waiting to rehearse his big number for the Grammy Awards telecast. On the CBS rundown sheet that we grabbed off a stack backstage, it was listed about a third of the way down:

25. INTRO JACKIE MASON (Billy Crystal) :40
26. COMEDY PERFORMANCE (Jackie Mason) 4:00
27. AWARD #5—BEST COMEDY RECORDING (Steven Wright, Steve Allen) 3:00
28. Commercial Position #5 2:05
29-31. INTRO DELOITTE, HASKINS & SELLS :45
32. PERFORMANCE—MICHAEL JACKSON “The Way You Make Me Feel” “Man in the Mirror” 9:00
33. AWARD #6—ALBUM OF THE YEAR (Diana Ross, Herb Alpert) 3:00
34-37. Comm’l Pos #6/Title Card/CBS Elements/Open BB 4:10

When we slipped through a side

door into the darkened house, Mr. Jackson was sitting cross-legged, hugging his knees, on the shiny black stage, in dim light, talking to a woman in a gray leotard. He wore a soft brown felt hat, a shirt of deep blue, black tuxedo pants (high-water), with a white sash around his waist, and white socks and black dancing shoes, and he was waiting while five stagehands crawled around on their hands and knees and cleaned the floor. (Soda pop had been spread on it to give better traction for dancing, a man told us later, and Mr. Jackson, who likes to slip and slide around, wanted it off.) We slid into an aisle seat about ten rows back and stared at him. It seemed impossible not to stare at the black curls and soft eyes that look out from tabloid covers every week at the checkout counter, and he struck us as bigger and friendlier than the haunted waif of the supermarket; he looked more or less like a dancer waiting to go to work. He stood up and flexed, he hugged the woman, he did a few steps with a short, heavy man with a ponytail and wearing a long brown coat, who had strolled in from the wings, preceded by a long cigar. They embraced, and spent ten or fifteen friendly minutes talking, and a minute later Mr. Jackson gave a good hug to a little man wearing a headset and a white sailor cap. Mr. Jackson smiled; he chatted with his choreographer, Vince; he looked all wound up and ready to go.



The big number would be done under a high, handsome Aztec Deco arch, against a black background and swirling clouds of fog and thirty-six overhead spotlights swinging back and forth to make those bright intersections of beams that spell show biz, as a twenty-person black gospel choir rose from the basement on one of Radio City's seventy-foot hydraulic elevators—rose into the clouds, the beams waving and turning rainbow colors—and stepped forward onto a seventy-foot silver platform and did a few little dance steps there: *left* boogaloo, *right* boogaloo, and a boogie-boogie down three steps to the stage, lip-synching the refrain "Man in the mirror! Make that change!"

Various men were consulting on the fog, looking up at the spotlights, and consulting on them and on the elevator. Every little while, a voice called out "O.K., everybody!" as if the time had finally come to do the deed, and then more men wandered in to consult with one another in the classic head-shaking, hands-on-hips style; men came and went, presumably to consult and be consulted elsewhere; and Mr. Jackson talked and touched people, and strolled around, laughed, passing his time smoothly.

The houselights came up. Aside from us and a few camera operators (one of whom sat on a high camera crane parked in the center aisle) and a few security men and about forty large white placards scattered here and there in the first twelve rows of seats, the house was empty. The cards marked seats where the famous would be sitting for the cameras to seek out: such as Little Richard, Herbie Hancock, and Itzhak Perlman together in the front row, Roy Orbison behind Cab Calloway, and, nearby, Mayor Koch, next to Joe Cocker, near Miles Davis, next to Robin Williams. A few rows farther back, leaning against a seat, was a bundle of big white cue cards, and one lying on the carpet said:

BILLY: Whitney Houston! Whew!

We asked a man who seemed to be in charge of cue cards if he could tell us how Michael Jackson would be introduced, and he said, "No intro. They figured he doesn't need one. The house'll go to black, the music'll start, and he'll be there."

We stood in the aisle, put our hands on our hips, looked around at the grand old palace glowing in the dimness, and felt—well, *good*. Stage rehearsals are the slow boat to China, we remembered from an old talent show we were in years ago. They're a long afternoon on the front porch watching the paint dry, they're a day at the frog races, a drive to Scranton, a night at the curling match—they're *deliberate*—and, like so many slow occasions, they are a calm reflecting pool of amiability. It was nice to see that it's the same for Michael Jackson—a long piece of standing around and kidding with the help, a few friendly, democratic hours in a big star's life.

"O.K., everybody!" said a definite voice. "Let's do it." And someone else called, "Stand by, please!"

Mr. Jackson shed his hat, stood up at a microphone stand, and sang, "I'm starting with the man in the mirror. I'm asking him to change his ways." He danced, lip-synching to the terrific dance tune as the choir rose through the fog, boogalooed, and went step-step-step down the stairs. We watched them do the song four times in the next couple of hours, and each time the star lip-synched perfectly, even the hiccups and sighs and cries on the recording, and danced his sliding, graceful way from one chalk mark to another—a few sweet nasty steps here (Uhhh! Uhhh!), a pelvic thrust there and *there* (Oooh!), a grimace, step, step, step—and after each time, while he waited for the crew to adjust a light, replace a mike, re-aim the fog, he looked happy out there in the light.

After the third time, he said "Ed?" and a voice in the speakers said "Yes, Michael."

"We got it wrong. Sorry. I give them a cue." He pointed to the choir. "And then I turn around." He spun. "And on the turnaround, that's your cue. O.K.?"

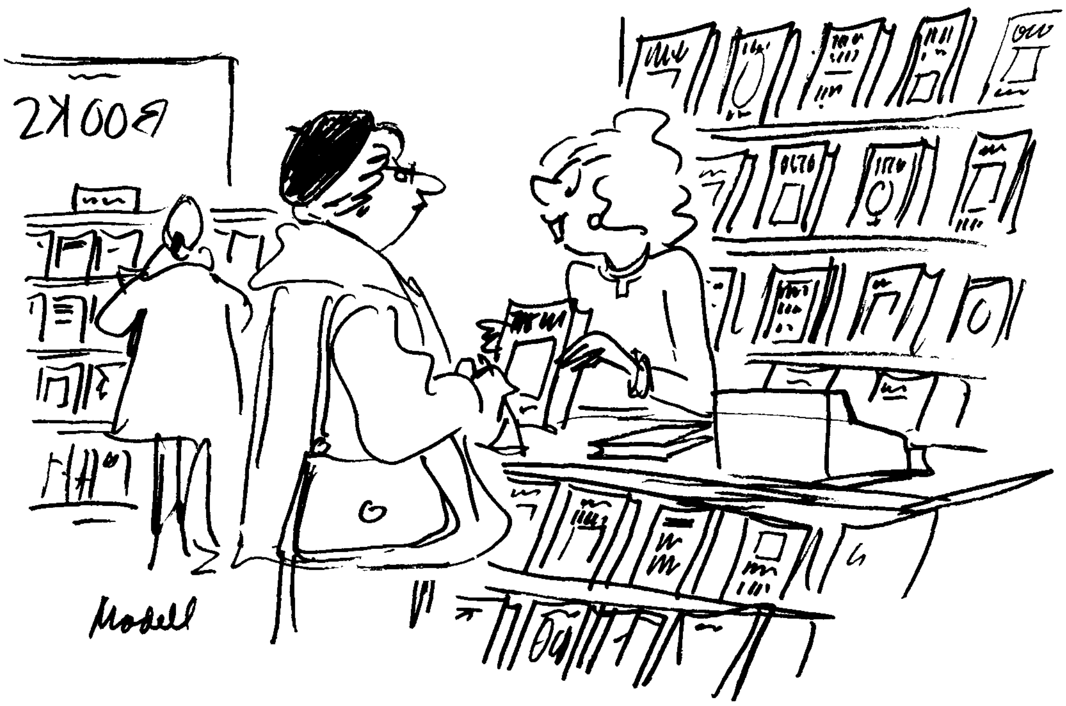
"Sorry."

"All right," he said, and waited to do the number one more time.

Past Lives

IF you ask Michael Talbot, the author of "Your Past Lives: A Reincarnation Handbook," what he thinks of (1) Shirley MacLaine and her previous lives, (2) Ramtha, the thirty-five-thousand-year-old warrior who once lived in Atlantis and now speaks through an ex-housewife in Washington, and (3) the magical healing powers of crystals, he'll tell you (1) "MacLaine's a little flaky" and (2) and (3) "I feel that we are in a great age of consciousness but that the signs of it are certainly not the people who are listening to Ramtha and wearing crystals. My only hope is that it leads to something better."

We met up with Mr. Talbot—a slightly built man with curly sandy hair and a neatly trimmed beard, who gives his age as either thirty-four or thirty-five ("Age is so irrelevant," he says)—on a recent Saturday morning, when the New York Open Center, on Spring Street, had provided him with a skylit room for his day-long seminar "Your Past Lives: Exploring the Techniques for Remembering Past Lives." By ten o'clock, some sixty people—writers, artists, therapists, textile designers, accountants, Wall Street middle managers—had assembled in the Open Center, eagerly awaiting confirmation of their suspicions that they had lived among the Pharaohs, had been persecuted during the Inquisition, or had ridden with Custer (or



"You're going to love this one. The man gets it right in the neck."

all three). As we arrived, Mr. Talbot was saying, "This isn't the only subway stop on the line."

A petite, dark-haired woman dressed in purple and black who was standing at the back of the room raised her hand, and Mr. Talbot called on her. "I met someone a few years ago who told me he could see that I had once been a nonhuman entity," she said. "A tree, he said. I was a little taken aback at first. But then it made sense. I mean, I know I didn't have branches or anything. But in this lifetime I have definite feelings about trees—our essences are intertwined. The first time I went to Florida, what I wanted most of all was to see palm trees."

"Thank you," Mr. Talbot said, and he went on to discuss how the soul sculpts the body to its own needs; for instance, if you have chronic shoulder pains you might have been injured in a battle in Carthage.

"Will you be clarifying the difference between soul and spirit?" a young woman seated near the wall asked.

"I have no idea," Mr. Talbot replied, and he introduced a person who he said might know—Carol Dryer, an outgoing, humorous woman in a bright-red dress. ("Red represents the soul," she told us later.) Ms. Dryer lives in California, and her client list for her past-lives psychic services includes Linda Gray, of "Dallas," and Tina Turner.

"When I first met Michael Talbot, he told me it was nice meeting me," Ms. Dryer said. "I looked at him and said, 'But I've known you for thousands of years.' Now we go to museums together and talk about the things we used to own."

Lunch break. As half a dozen people poured herbal tea at a table outside the door, Mr. Talbot asked us to join him for lunch at a restaurant across the street, and, over broiled sole and brown rice, he filled us in on his background. "I've always known I had past lives," he said. "At first, I wouldn't call my parents Mom and Dad, because it didn't make sense to me that they were my only set of parents. I knew I'd had others. When I was four or five, they said I was embarrassing them in front of their friends, and that sounded reasonable to me, so I said 'O.K., I'll call you Mom and Dad.' My mother read my book, and now she can't shut up. She's sure she lived in Austria, because she loves waltzes."

When class reconvened, Mr. Talbot told his audience, "I live on Central Park West, and one morning I walked out and thought, Gosh, this is just like St. Petersburg. I asked myself why I was thinking that—I'd never been there, it's not even called that anymore. Then, one day, I had a Smirnoff Vodka ad in front of me—a picture of the czar. I suddenly became very angry. I knew I'd had one of those, but someone had stolen it. I caught myself, though, before I jumped up to look for it. Now, do any of you have a culture or time period you're particularly drawn to?"

"Egypt," said a middle-aged woman. "I go to the Temple of Dendur a lot."

"That's a culture that went on for four thousand years, so it stands to reason that you lived then," Mr. Talbot said. "Going to museums is a good idea. Thinking about what kinds of food you like is also helpful."

"I had a woman staying in my house once," Ms. Dryer put in, "and she had piled up all her belongings within reach of her bed. I told her she must have lived on a Chinese junk. She said, 'Oh, that explains why I love chop suey even though I live in Denver.' "

We looked at our watch. Ms. Dryer asked someone to turn down the lights, and began speaking in lulling tones: "Your body is light, it's getting lighter, you're moving away from the earth, you see the earth, you see yourself, you're very relaxed. Now look down at your feet. What do you see?" We saw our shoes. "Now look up. What do you see?" Our legs. "Where are you?" At 83 Spring Street. We thought about being on the beach. We wondered if we'd be out in time to make a six-thirty movie.

The lights went up, and a woman said she'd looked down and seen Roman gladiator sandals and a man's hairy legs, and the next thing she knew she was embracing a woman her gladiator self had loved in Switzerland and was suddenly stabbed in the back. Another woman was upset because she hadn't seen anything vivid—just an image here and there of herself as a young Polynesian girl in Hawaii. Ms. Dryer said it wasn't necessary to see your past lives in terms of a Cecil B. De Mille production. The woman seated next to the former Polynesian said that she'd been a slave among the Pharaohs and that she was worried about wanting things in this life. Ms. Dryer said it was O.K.—she was allowed to be rich now.

FIVE POINTS

WHILE they drink vodka and orange juice in the trailer park on the cliffs above Lake Huron, Neil Bauer tells Brenda a story. It happened a long way away, in Victoria, British Columbia, where Neil grew up. Neil is not much younger than Brenda—less than three years—but it sometimes feels to her like a generation gap, because she grew up here, and stayed here, marrying Cornelius Zendt when she was twenty years old, and Neil grew up on the West Coast, where things were very different, and he left home at sixteen to travel and work all over.

What Brenda has seen of Victoria, in pictures, is flowers and horses. Flowers spilling out of baskets hanging from old-fashioned lampposts, filling grottoes and decorating parks; horses carrying wagonloads of people to look at the sights.

"That's all just tourist shit," Neil says. "About half the place is nothing but tourist shit. That's not where I'm talking about."

He is talking about Five Points, which was—is—a section, or maybe just a corner, of the city, where there was a school and a drugstore and a Chinese grocery and a candy store. When Neil was in public school, the candy store was run by a grouchy old woman with painted-on eyebrows. She used to let her cat sprawl in the sun in the window. After she died, some new people, Europeans, not Poles or Czechs but from some smaller country—Croatia; is that a country?—took over the candy store and changed it. They cleared out all the stale candy and the balloons that wouldn't blow up and the ballpoint pens that wouldn't write and the dead Mexican jumping beans. They painted the place top to bottom and put in a few chairs and tables. They still sold candy—in clean jars now, instead of cat-pissed cardboard boxes—and rulers and erasers. But they also started to operate as a kind of neighborhood café, with coffee and soft drinks and homemade cakes.

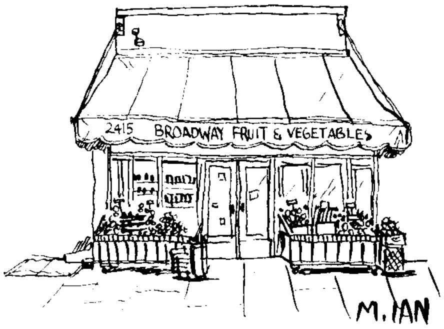
The wife, who made the cakes, was very shy and fussy, and if you came up and tried to pay her she would call for her husband in Croatian, or whatever—let's say it was Croatian—in such a startled way you'd think that you'd broken into her house and interrupted her private life. The husband spoke English pretty well. He was a little bald guy, polite and nervous, a chain-smoker, and she was a big, heavy woman with bent shoulders, always wearing an apron and a cardigan sweater. He washed the windows and swept off the sidewalk and took the money, and she baked the buns and cakes and made things that people had never seen before but that quickly became popular, like pierogi and poppy-seed loaf.

Their two daughters spoke English just like Canadians, and went to the convent school. They showed up in their school uniforms in the late afternoon and got right to work. The younger one washed the coffee cups and glasses and wiped the tables, and the older one did everything else. She waited on customers, worked the cash register, filled the trays, and shooed away the little kids who were hanging around not buying anything. When the younger one finished washing up, she would sit in the back room doing her homework, but the older one never sat down. If there was nothing to do at the moment, she just stood by the cash register, watching.

The younger one was called Lisa, the older one Maria. Lisa was small and nice enough looking—just a little kid. But Maria, by the age of maybe thirteen, had big, saggy breasts and a rounded-out stomach and thick legs. She wore glasses, and her hair was done in braids around her head. She looked about fifty years old.

And she acted it, the way she took over the store. Both parents seemed willing to take a back seat to her. The mother retreated to the back room, and the father became a handyman-helper. Maria understood English and money and wasn't fazed by anything. All the little kids said, "Ugh, that Maria—isn't she *gross*?," but they were scared of her. She looked like she already knew all about running a business.

BRENDA and her husband also ran a business. They bought a farm just south of Logan and filled the barn with used appliances (which Cornelius knows how to fix) and secondhand furniture and all the other things—the dishes, pictures, knives and forks and ornaments and jewelry—that people like to poke through and think they're buying cheap. It's called Zendt's Furniture Barn. Locally, a lot of people refer to it as the Used Furniture on the Highway.

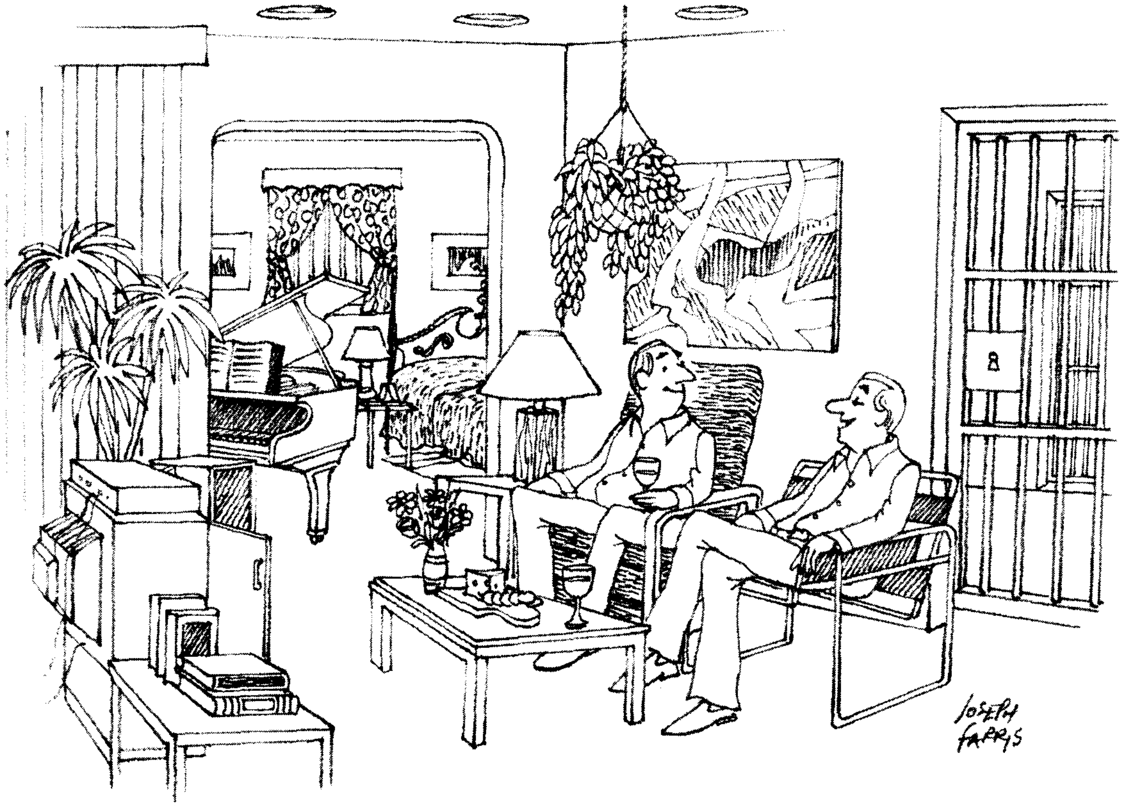


They didn't always do this. Brenda used to teach nursery school, and Cornelius, who is twelve years older than she is, worked in the salt mine at Walley, on the lake. After his accident they had to think of something he could do sitting down most of the time, and they used the money they got to buy a worn-out farm with good buildings. Brenda quit her job, because there was too much for Cornelius to handle by himself. There are hours in the day and sometimes whole days when he has to lie down and watch television, or just lie on the living-room floor, coping with the pain.

In the evenings Cornelius likes to drive over to Walley. Brenda never offers—she waits for him to say, "Why don't you drive?" if he doesn't want the movement of his arms or legs to jar his back. The kids used to go along, but now that they're in high school—Lorna in grade eleven and Mark in grade nine—they usually don't want to. Brenda and Cornelius sit in the parked van and look at the seagulls lining up out on the breakwater, the grain elevators, the great green-lighted shafts and ramps of the mine where Cornelius used to work, the pyramids of coarse gray salt. Sometimes there is a long lake boat in port. Of course, there are pleasure boats in the summer, wind surfers out on the water, people fishing off the pier. The time of the sunset is posted daily on a board on the beach then; people come especially to watch it. Now, in October, the board is bare and the lights are turned on along the pier—one or two diehards are still fishing—and the water is choppy and cold-looking, the harbor entirely businesslike.

There is still work going on on the beach. Since early last spring, boulders have been set up in some places, sand has been poured down in others, a long rocky spit has been constructed, all making a protected curve of beach, with a rough road along it, on which they drive. Never mind Cornelius's back—he wants to see. Trucks, earthmovers, bulldozers have been busy all day, and they are still sitting there, temporarily tame and useless monsters, in the evening. This is where Neil works. He drives these things—he hauls the rocks around, clears the space, and makes the road for Brenda and Cornelius to drive on. He works for the Fordyce Construction Company, from Logan, which has the contract.

Cornelius looks at everything. He knows what the boats are loading (soft wheat, salt, corn) and where they're going, he understands how the harbor is being deepened, and he always wants to get a look at the huge pipe running at an angle onto the beach and crossing it, finally letting out water and sludge and rocks from the lake bottom which have never before seen the light of day. He goes and stands beside this pipe to listen to the commotion inside it, the banging and groaning of the rocks and water rushing on their way. He asks what a rough winter will do to all this changing and arranging if the lake just picks up the rocks and beach and flings them aside and eats away at the clay cliffs, as before.



"I'm quite content. This was my prison of choice."

Brenda listens to Cornelius and thinks about Neil. She derives pleasure from being in the place where Neil spends his days. She likes to think of the noise and the steady strength of these machines and of the men in the cabs bare-armed, easy with this power, as if they knew naturally what all this roaring and chomping up the shore was leading to. Their casual, good-humored authority. She loves the smell of work on their bodies, the language of it they speak, their absorption in it, their disregard of her. She loves to get a man fresh from all that.

When she is down there with Cornelius and hasn't seen Neil for a while, she can feel uneasy and forlorn, as if this might be a world that could turn its back on her. Just after she has been with Neil, it's her kingdom—but what isn't, then? The night before they are to meet—last night, for instance—she should be feeling happy and expectant, but to tell the truth the last twenty-four hours, even the last two or three days, seem too full of pitfalls, too momentous, for her to feel anything much but caution and anxiety. It's a countdown—she actually counts the hours. She has a tendency to fill them with good deeds—cleaning jobs around the house that she was putting off, mowing the lawn, doing a reorganization at the Furniture Barn, even weeding the rock garden. The morning of the day itself is when the hours pass most laggingly and are full of dangers. She always has a story about where she's supposed to be going that afternoon, but her expedition can't be an absolutely necessary one—that would be calling too much attention to it—so there's the chance, always, that something will come up to make Cornelius say, "Can't you put that off till later in the week? Can't you do it some other day?" It's not so much that she wouldn't then be able to get in touch with Neil which bothers her. Neil would wait an hour or so, then figure out what had happened. It's that she thinks she couldn't bear it. To be so close, then have to do without. Yet she doesn't feel any physical craving during those last torturing hours; even her secret preparations—her washing, shaving, oiling, and perfuming—don't arouse her. She stays numb, harassed by details, lies, arrangements, until the moment when she actually sees Neil's car. The fear that she won't be able to get away is succeeded, during the fifteen-minute drive, by the fear that he won't show up, in that lonely, dead-end spot in the swamp which is their meeting place. What she's looking forward to, during those last hours, gets to be less of a physical thing—so that missing it would be like missing not a meal you're hungry for but a ceremony on which your life or salvation depended.

BY the time Neil was an older teenager—but not old enough to get into bars, still hanging around at the Five Points Confectionery (the Croatians kept the old name for it)—the change had arrived, which everybody who was alive then remembers. (That's what Neil thinks, but Brenda says, "I don't know; as far as I was concerned, all that was just sort of going on someplace else.") Nobody knew what to do about it, nobody was prepared. Some schools were strict about long hair (on boys), some thought it best to let that go and

TWO CLIMBING

1

After the blackface sheep, almond coats daubed
to the blush of slaughtered innards,
all I saw going up was a small frog
speckled rust and raw olive, slick as a
lizard, with a lizard's fixed
unblinking eye. It splays and tumbles
to a safe shadow where heather roots
wind through limestone and bare themselves
in tea-brown bolts of bog water, while I
keep climbing behind Conor, who's twelve, my heart
starting to knock at thin air, effort. He loves
leading me on, and when I look up
to where he stands waiting for me—legs apart
and firmly planted on a rock spur, gazing
round him at the mountains and the sea, at
the thin ribboning road beige below us, at my figure
bent over the flat green hands of bracken—
I'm struck sharp as a heart pain
by the way this minute brims
with the whole story: such touched fullness
and, plain as day, the emptiness at last.

2

Once down again, safe home, we both
look wondering up to the top of Tully Mountain
and the barely visible concrete plinth
that peaks it, on which he sat
exalted for a time and took, he said,
the whole of Ireland in with one big
swivelling glance, and took twelve snaps
to prove it: a windy shimmer of cloud, mountain,
water—a rack of amphibian spirits drifting
over our heads. I saw the way our elevation
simplified the lower world to rocky crops and
patches, neat green and brown trapezoids
of grass and bog, bright pewtered spheres
of pure reflection. We sat out of the wind
on two flat rocks and passed
in silence to one another
another sweet dry biscuit and a naggin
whiskey bottle of water, pleased with ourselves
at some dumb male thing for which he finds
the word: *adventure*. Going down,
he lopes, leads, is deliberately solicitous,
pointing out loose rocks, a safer way,
the treacherous bright-green surface
of a swampy passage. His knowing talk
enlarges airily our trek and conquest.

3

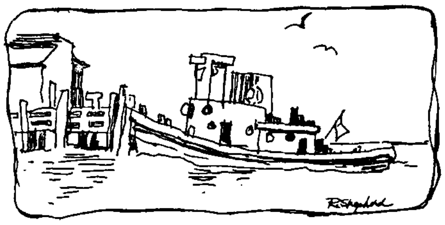
Walking at last the field path
to the house, he is all straight spine and
limber stride in his mudded Wellingtons,
while I note how stone silent the plum-colored
broad back of the mountain is, keeping
the wind off our lives in this hollow. Before going in,
he sets on an outside windowsill
the horned sheep skull we rescued
from the bracken, weathered to a cracked
adze of jawbone ringed and bristling
with broken teeth. Bone-flanged,
the great eye sockets gape, and, like fine stitching,
the skull's one partition seams dead center.
In less than a week from now he'll have
forgotten this bony trophy, but not
the journey we took together to find it—
that hammering brisk ascent, the luminous
view of everything, the buffeting winds, the unruffled
interlude of quiet, then, in the end,
that sweet leading down. While I'll go on
watching the split skull—color of crushed
almond or washed-out barley muslin—shine.

—EAMON GRENNAN

• •

concentrate on serious things. Just hold it back with an elastic band was all they asked. And what about clothes? Chains and seed beads, rope sandals, Indian cotton, African patterns, everything all of a sudden soft and loose and bright. In Victoria the change may not have been contained so well as in some other places. It spilled over. Maybe the climate softened people up, not just young people. There was a big burst of paper flowers and marijuana fumes and music (the stuff that seemed so wild then, Neil says, and seems so tame now), and that music rolling out of downtown windows hung with dishonored flags, over the flower beds in Beacon Hill Park to the yellow broom on the sea cliffs to the happy beaches looking over at the magic peaks of the Olympics. Everybody was in on the act. University professors wandered around with flowers behind their ears, and people's mothers turned up in those outfits. Neil and his friends had contempt for these people, naturally—these hip oldsters, toe-dippers. Neil and his friends took the world of drugs and music seriously.

When they wanted to do drugs they went outside the Confectionery. Sometimes they went as far as the cemetery and sat on the seawall. Sometimes they sat beside the shed that was in back of the store. They couldn't go in; the shed was locked. Then they went back inside the Confectionery and drank Cokes and ate hamburgers and cheeseburgers and cinnamon buns and cakes, because they got very hungry. They leaned back on their chairs and watched the patterns move on the old pressed-tin ceiling, which the Croatians had painted white. Flowers, towers, birds, and monsters detached themselves, swam overhead.



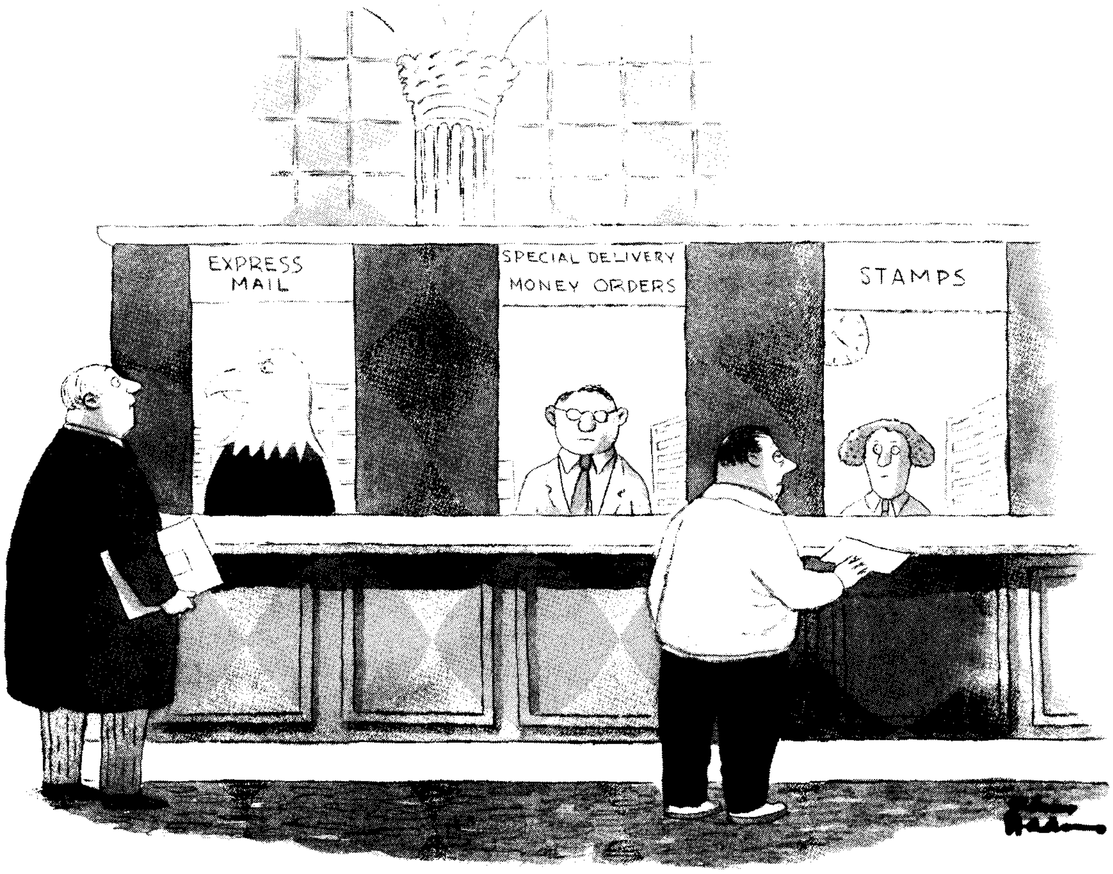
"What were you taking?" Brenda says.

"Pretty good stuff, unless we got sold something rotten. Hash, acid, mescaline sometimes. Combinations sometimes. Nothing too serious."

"All I ever did was smoke about a third of a joint on the beach when at first I wasn't even sure what it was, and when I got home my father slapped my face."

(That's not the truth. It was Cornelius. Cornelius slapped her face. It was before they were married, when Cornelius was working nights in the mine and she would sit around on the beach after dark with some friends of her own age. Next day she told him, and he slapped her face.)

All they did in the Confectionery was eat, and moon around, happily stoned, and play stupid games, such as racing toy cars along the tabletops. Once a guy lay down on the floor and they squirted ketchup at him. Nobody cared. The daytime customers—the housewives buying bakery goods and the pensioners killing time with a coffee—never came in at night. The mother and Lisa had gone home on the bus, to wherever they lived. Then even the father started going home, a little after suppertime. Maria was left in charge. She didn't care what they did, as long as they didn't do damage and as long as they paid.



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This was the world of drugs that belonged to the older boys, that they kept the younger boys out of. It was a while before they noticed that the younger ones had something, too. They had some secret of their own. They were growing insolent and self-important. Some of them were always pestering the older boys to let them buy drugs. That was how it became evident that they had quite a bit of unexplained money.

Neil had—he has—a younger brother named Jonathan. Very straight now, married, a teacher. Jonathan began dropping hints, other boys did the same thing, they couldn't keep the secret to themselves, pretty soon it was all out in the open. They were getting their money from Maria. Maria was paying them to have sex with her. They did it in the back shed, after she closed the store up at night. She had the key to the shed.

She also had the day-to-day control of the money. She emptied the till at night, she kept the books. Her parents trusted her to do this. Why not? She was good at arithmetic, and she was devoted to the business. She understood the whole operation better than they did. It seemed that they were very uncertain and superstitious about money, and they did not want to put it in the bank. They kept it in a safe or maybe just a strongbox somewhere, and got it as they needed it. They must have felt they couldn't trust anybody, banks or anybody, outside of the family. What a godsend Maria must have seemed to them—steady and smart, not pretty enough to be tempted to put her hopes or energies into anything but the business. A pillar, Maria.

She was a head taller and thirty or forty pounds heavier than those boys she paid.

THERE are always a few bad moments after Brenda turns off the highway—where she has some excuse to be driving, should anyone see her—and onto the side road. The van is noticeable, unmistakable. But once she has taken the plunge, driving where she shouldn't be, she feels stronger. When she turns onto the dead-end swamp road, there's no excuse possible. Spotted here, she's finished. She has about half a mile to drive out in the open before she gets to the trees. She'd hoped that they would plant corn, which would grow tall and shelter her, but they hadn't, they'd planted beans. At least the roadsides here hadn't been sprayed; the grass and weeds and berry bushes had grown tall, though not tall enough to hide a van. There was goldenrod and milkweed, with the pods burst open, and dangling bunches of bright, poisonous fruit, and wild grapevine flung over everything, even creeping onto the road. And finally she was in, she was into the tunnel of trees. Cedar, hemlock, farther back in the wetter ground the wispy-looking tamarack, lots of soft maples with leaves spotty yellow and brown. No standing water, no black pools, even far back in the trees. They'd had luck, with the dry summer and fall. She and Neil had had luck, not the farmers. If it had been a wet year, they could never have used this place. The hard ruts she eases the van through would have been slick mud and the turnaround spot at the end a soggy sinkhole.

That's about a mile and a half in. There are some tricky spots to drive—a couple of bumpy little hills rising out of the swamp, and a narrow log bridge over a creek where she can't see any water, just choking, yellowy cress and nettles, sucking at dry mud.

Neil drives an old blue Mercury—dark blue that can turn into a pool, a spot of swampy darkness under the trees. She strains to see it. She doesn't mind getting there a few minutes ahead of him, to compose herself, brush out her hair and check her face and spray her throat with purse cologne (sometimes between her legs as well). More than a few minutes makes her nervous. She isn't afraid of wild dogs or rapists or eyes watching her out of thickets—she used to pick berries in here when she was a child; that's how she knew about the place. She is afraid of what may not be there, not what is. The absence of Neil, the possibility of his defection, his sudden denial of her. That can turn any place, any thing, ugly and menacing and stupid. Trees or gardens or parking meters or coffee tables—it wouldn't matter. Once, he didn't come; he was sick: food poisoning or the most incredible hangover of his life—something terrible, he told her on the phone that night—and she had to pretend it was somebody calling to sell them a sofa. She never forgot the wait, the draining of hope, the heat and the bugs—it was in July—and her body oozing sweat, here on the seat of the van, like some sickly admission of defeat.

He is there, he's there first; she can see one eye of the Mercury in the deep cedar shade. It's like hitting water when you're dead of heat and scratched and bitten all over from picking berries in the summer bush—the lapping sweetness of it, the cool kindness soaking up all your troubles in its sudden depths. She gets the van parked and fluffs out her hair and jumps out, tries the door to show it's locked, else he'll send her running back, just like Cornelius—are you sure you locked the van? She walks across the little sunny space, the leaf-scattered ground, seeing herself walk, in her tight white pants and turquoise top and low-slung white belt and high heels, her bag over her shoulder. A shapely woman, with fair, freckled skin and blue eyes rimmed with blue shadow and liner, screwed up appealingly against any light. Her reddish-blond hair—touched up yesterday—catching the sun like a crown of petals. She wears heels just for this walk, just for this moment of crossing the road with his eyes on her, the extra bit of pelvic movement and leg length they give her.

Often, often, they've made love in his car, right here at their meeting place, though they always keep telling each other to wait. Stop; wait till we get to the trailer. "Wait" means the opposite of what it says, after a while. Once, they started as they drove. Brenda slipped off her pants and pulled up her loose summer skirt, not saying a word, looking straight ahead, and they ended up stopping beside the highway, taking a shocking risk. Now when they pass this spot she always says something like "Don't go off the road here," or "Somebody should put up a warning sign."

"Historical marker," Neil says.

They have a history of passion, the way families have a history, or people who have gone to school together. They don't have much else. They've never eaten a meal with each other, or seen a movie. But they've come through some complicated adventures together, and dangers—not just of the stopping-on-the-highway kind. They've taken risks, surprising each other, always correctly. In dreams you can have the feeling that you've had this dream before, that you have this dream over and over again, and you know that it's really nothing that simple. You know that there's a whole underground system that you call "dreams," having nothing better to call them, and that this system is not like roads or tunnels but more like a live body network, all coiling and stretching, unpredictable but finally familiar—where you are now, where you've always been. That was the way it was with them and sex, going somewhere like that, and they understood the same things about it and trusted each other, so far.

Another time on the highway Brenda saw a white convertible approaching, an old white Mustang convertible with the top down—this was in the summer—and she slid to the floor.

"Who's in that car?" she said. "Look! Quick! Tell me."

"Girls," Neil said. "Four or five girls. Out looking for guys."

"My daughter," Brenda said, scrambling up again. "Good thing I wasn't wearing my seat belt."

"You got a daughter old enough to drive? You got a daughter owns a convertible?"

"Her friend owns it. Lorna doesn't drive yet. But she could—she's sixteen."

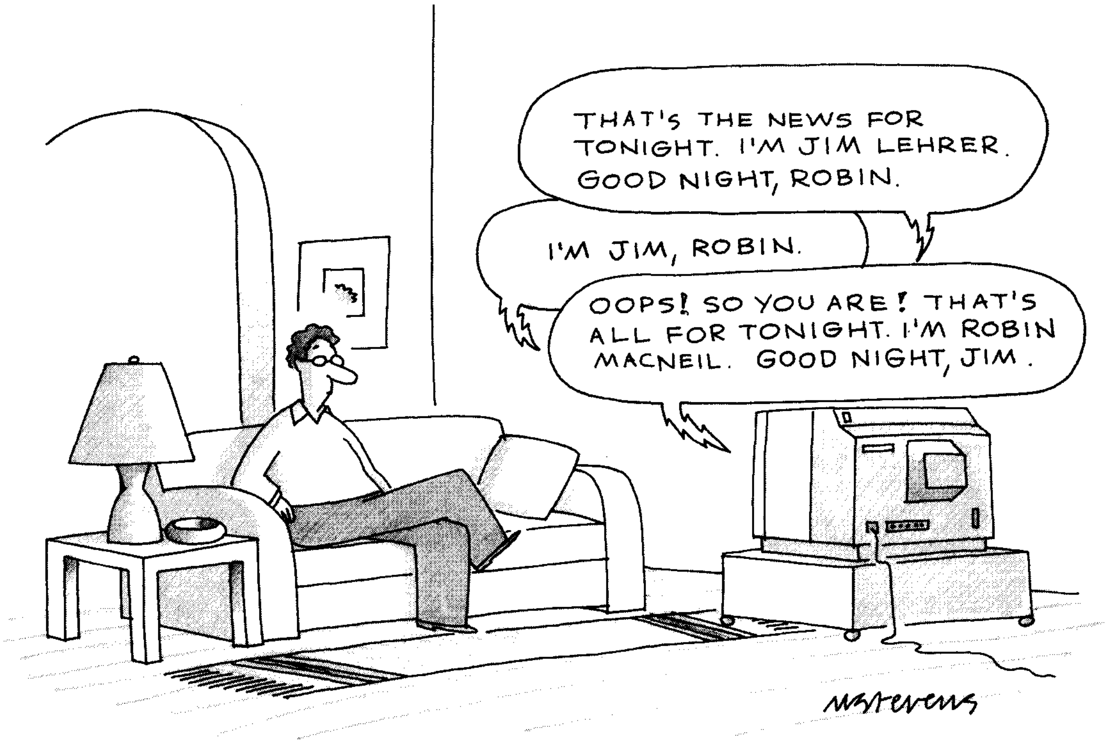
She felt there were things in the air then that he could have said, that she hoped he wouldn't. The things men feel obliged to say about young girls.

"You could have one that age yourself," she said. "Maybe you do and don't know it. Also, she lied to me. She said she was going to play tennis."

Again he didn't say anything she hoped not to hear, any sly reminder about lies. A danger past.

All he said was "Easy. Take it easy. Nothing happened."

She had no way of knowing how much he


THAT'S THE NEWS FOR TONIGHT. I'M JIM LEHRER. GOOD NIGHT, ROBIN.
I'M JIM, ROBIN.
OOPS! SO YOU ARE! THAT'S ALL FOR TONIGHT. I'M ROBIN MACNEIL. GOOD NIGHT, JIM.
MStevens

understood of her feelings at that moment, or if he understood anything. They almost never mentioned that part of her life. They never mentioned Cornelius, though he was the one Neil talked to, the first time he came to the Furniture Barn. He came to look for a bicycle—just a cheap bike to ride on the country roads. They had no bikes around at that time, but he stayed and talked to Cornelius for a while, about the kind he wanted, ways of repairing or improving that kind, how they should watch out for one. He said he would drop by again. He did that, very soon, and only Brenda was there. Cornelius had gone to the house to lie down; it was one of his bad days. Neil and Brenda made everything clear to each other then, without saying anything definite. When he phoned and asked her to have a drink with him, in a tavern on the lakeshore road, she knew what he was asking and she knew what she would answer.

She told him she hadn't done anything like this before. That was a lie in one way and in another way true.

Wandering Minstrel

• •

DURING store hours, Maria didn't let one sort of transaction interfere with another. Everybody paid as usual. She didn't behave any differently; she was still in charge. The boys knew that they had some bargaining power, but they were never sure how much. A dollar. Two dollars. Five. It wasn't as if she had to depend on one or two of them. There were always several friends outside, waiting and willing, when she took one of them into the shed before she caught the bus home. She warned them that she would stop dealing with them if they talked, and for a while they believed her. She didn't hire them regularly at first, or all that often.

That was at first. Over a few months' time, things began to change. Maria's needs increased. The bargaining got to be more open and obstreperous. The news got out. Maria's powers were being chipped, then hammered, away.

Come on, Maria, give me a ten. Me, too. Maria, give me a ten, too. Come on, Maria, you know me.

Twenty, Maria. Give me twenty. Come on. Twenty bucks. You owe me, Maria. Come on, now. You don't want me to tell. Come on, Maria.

A twenty, a twenty, a twenty. Maria is forking over. She is going to the shed every night. And if that isn't bad enough for her, some boys start refusing. They want the money first. They take the money and then they say no. They say she never paid them. She paid them, she paid them in front of witnesses, and all the witnesses deny that she did. They shake their heads, they taunt her. *No. You never paid him. I never saw you. You pay me now and I'll go. I promise I will. I'll go. You pay me twenty, Maria.*

And the older boys, who have learned from their younger brothers what is going on, are coming up to her at the cash register and saying, "How about me, Maria? You know me, too. Come on, Maria, how about a twenty?" Those boys never go to the shed with her, never. Did she think they would? They never even promise, they just ask her for money. *You know me a long time, Maria.* They threaten, they wheedle. *Aren't I your friend, too, Maria?*

Nobody was Maria's friend.

Maria's matronly, watchful calm was gone—she looked wild and sullen and mean. She gave them looks full of hate, but she continued giving them money. She kept handing over the bills. Not even trying to bargain, or to argue or refuse, anymore. In a rage she did it—a silent rage. The more they taunted her, the more readily the twenty-dollar bills flew out of the till. Very little, perhaps nothing, was done to earn them, now.

They're stoned all the time, Neil and his friends. All the time, now that they have this money. They see sweet streams of atoms flowing in the Formica tabletops. Their colored souls are shooting out under their fingernails. Maria has gone crazy, the store is bleeding money. How can this go on? How is it going to end? Maria must be into the strongbox now; the till at the end of the day wouldn't have enough for her. And all the time her mother keeps on baking buns and making pierogi, and the father keeps sweeping the sidewalk and greeting the customers. Nobody has told them. They go on just the same.

They had to find out on their own. They found a bill that Maria hadn't paid—something like that, somebody coming in with an unpaid bill—and they went to get the money to pay it, and they found that there was no money. The money wasn't where they kept it, in the safe or strongbox or wherever, and it wasn't anywhere else—the money was gone. That was how they found out.

Maria had succeeded in giving away everything. All they had saved, all their slowly accumulated profits, all the money on which they operated their business. Truly, everything. They could not pay the rent now, they could *not* pay the electricity bill or their suppliers. They could not keep on running the Confectionery. At least they believed they couldn't. Maybe they simply had not the heart to go on.

The store was locked. A sign went up on the door: "Closed Until Further Notice." Nearly a year went by before the place was reopened. It had been turned into a laundromat.

People said it was Maria's mother, that big, meek, bent-over woman, who insisted on bringing charges against her daughter. She was scared of the English language and the cash register, but she brought Maria into court. Of course, Maria could only be charged as a juvenile, and she could only be sent to a place for young offenders, and nothing could be done about the boys at all. They all lied anyway—they said it wasn't them. Maria's parents must have found jobs, they must have gone on living in Victoria, because Lisa did. She still swam at the Y, and in a few years she was working at Eaton's, in Cosmetics. She was very glamorous and haughty by that time.

Neil always has vodka and orange juice for them to drink. That's Brenda's choice. She read somewhere that orange juice replenishes the Vitamin C that the liquor leeches away, and she hopes the vodka really can't be detected on your breath. Neil tidies up the trailer, too—or so she thinks, because of the paper bag full of beer cans leaning against the cupboard, a pile of newspapers pushed together, not really folded, a pair of socks kicked into a corner. Maybe his housemate does it. A man called Gary, whom Brenda has never met or seen a picture of, and wouldn't know if they met on the street. Would he know her? He knows she comes here, he knows when; does he even know her name? Does he recognize her perfume, the smell of her sex, when he comes home in the evening? She likes the trailer, the way nothing in it has been made to look balanced or permanent. Things set down just wherever they will be convenient. No curtains or placemats, not even a pair of salt and pepper shakers—just the salt box and pepper tin, the way they come from the store. She loves the sight of Neil's bed—badly made, with a rough plaid blanket and a flat pillow, not a marriage bed or a bed of illness, comfort, complication. The bed of his lust and sleep, equally strenuous and oblivious. She loves the life of his body, so sure of its rights. She wants commands from him, never requests. She wants to be his territory.

It's only in the bathroom that the dirt bothers her a bit, like anybody else's dirt, and she wishes they'd done a better job of cleaning the toilet and the washbasin.

They sit at the table to drink, looking out through the trailer window at the steely, glittering, choppy water of the lake. Here the trees, exposed to lake winds, are almost bare. Birch bones and poplars stiff and bright as straw frame the water. There may be snow in another month. Certainly in two months. The seaway will close, the lake boats will be tied up for the winter, there'll be a wild landscape of ice thrown up between the shore and the open water. Neil says he doesn't know what he'll do, once the work on the beach is over. Maybe stay on, try to get another job. Maybe go on unemployment insurance for a while, get a snowmobile, enjoy the winter. Or he could go and look for work somewhere else, visit friends. He has friends all over the continent of North America and out of it. He has friends in Peru.

"So what happened?" Brenda says. "Don't you have any idea what happened to Maria?"

Neil says no, he has no idea.

The story won't leave Brenda alone; it stays with her like a coating on the tongue, a taste in the mouth.

"Well, maybe she got married," she says. "After she got out. Lots of people get married who are no beauties. That's for sure. She might've lost weight and be looking good even."

"Sure," says Neil. "Maybe have guys paying her, instead of the other way round."

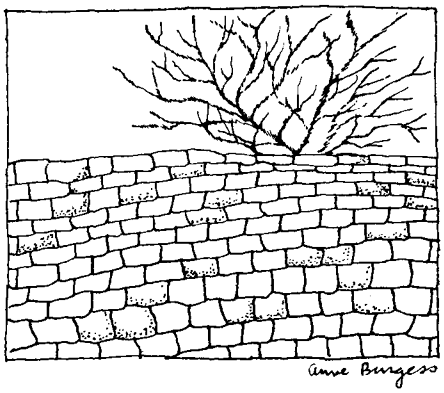
"Or she might still be just sitting in one of those places. One of those places where they put people."

Now she feels a pain between her legs. Not unusual after one of these sessions. If she were to stand up at this moment, she'd feel a throb there, she'd feel the blood flowing back down through all the little veins and arteries that have been squashed and bruised, she'd feel herself throbbing like a big swollen blister.

She takes a long drink and says, "So, how much money did you get out of her?"

"I never got anything," Neil says. "I just knew these other guys who did. It was my brother Jonathan made the money off her. I wonder what he'd say if I reminded him now."

"Older guys, too—you said older guys, too. Don't tell me you just sat back and watched and never got your share."



BORDER ZONE, MINEFIELD, SNOW EAST OF BEBRA

Only the barbed wire and glaring arc lamps
make this fresh snow distinct from any other.

All things are anguished at having
to exist in one form or another—

so many hawks glide over the mined snowy field,
not even small animals, one might suspect,

cross it unharmed. Catch and
pin have been so set

the lightest creature, even, would be blown to bits.
Out of blown clouds the full moon comes,

and the birds are gliding on and on, hungry still.

—Lars Gustafsson

(*Translated, from the Swedish, by Christopher Middleton.*)

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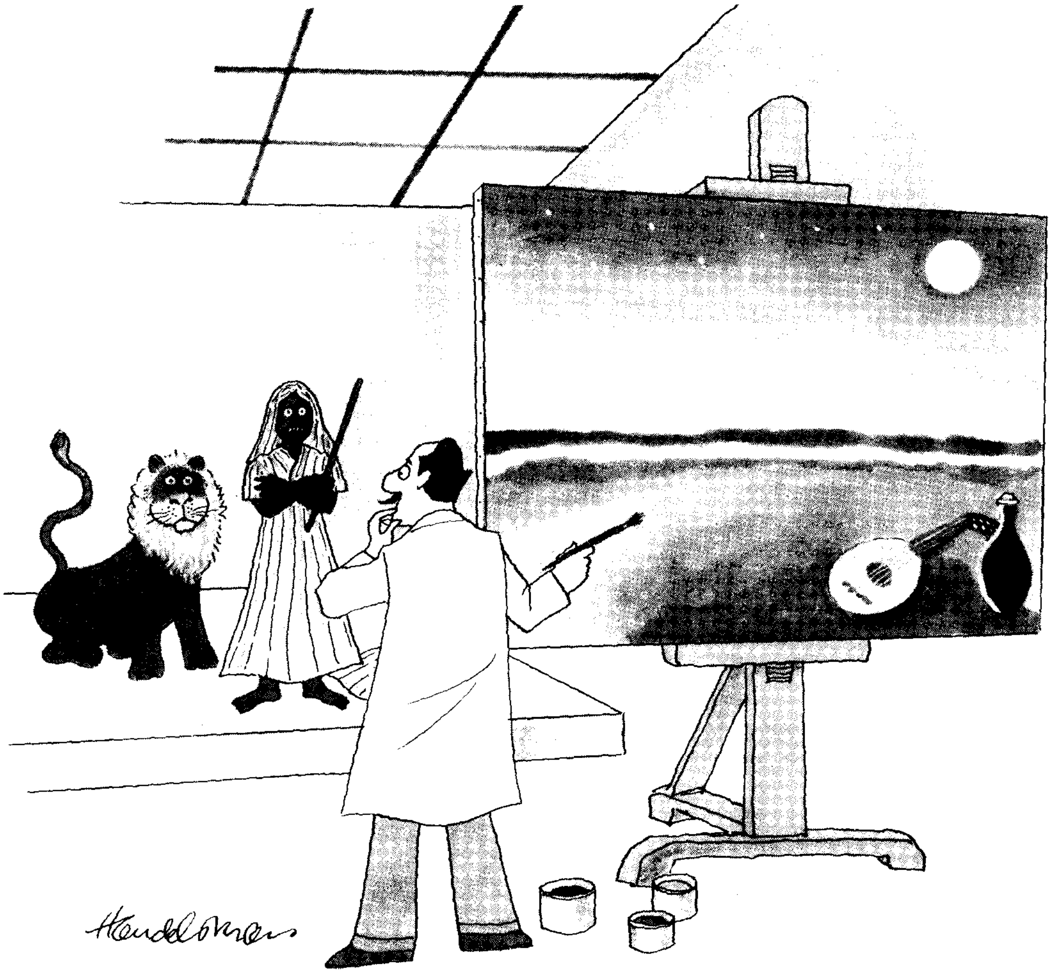


DECISIVE MOMENTS IN ART

Le Douanier Rousseau must choose the pose quickly. These models charge by the hour.

"That's what I *am* telling you. I never got anything."

Brenda clicks her tongue, tut-tut, and empties her glass and moves it around on the table, looking skeptically at the wet circles.

"Want another?" Neil says. He takes the glass out of her hand.

"I've got to go," she says. "Soon." You can make love in a hurry if you have to, but you need time for a fight. Is that what they're starting on? A fight? She feels edgy but happy. Her happiness is tight and private, not the sort that flows out from you and fuzzes everything up and makes you good-naturedly careless about what you say. The very opposite. She feels light and sharp and unconnected. When Neil brings her back a full glass she takes a drink from it at once, to safeguard this feeling.

"You've got the same name as my husband," she says. "It's funny I never thought of that before."

She has thought of it before. She just hasn't mentioned it, knowing it's not something Neil would like to hear.

"Cornelius isn't the same as Neil," he says.

"It's Dutch. Some Dutch people shorten it to Neil."

"Yeah, but I'm not Dutch, and I wasn't named Cornelius, just Neil."

"Still, if his had been shortened you'd be named the same."

"His isn't shortened."

"I never said it was. I said if it had been."

"So why say that if it isn't?"

He must feel the same thing she does—the slow but irresistible rise of a new excitement, the need to say, and hear, dire things. What a sharp, releasing pleasure there is in the first blow, and what a dazzling temptation ahead—destruction. You don't stop to think why you want that destruction. You just do.

"Why do we have to drink every time?" Neil says abruptly. "Do we want to turn ourselves into alcoholics or something?"

Brenda takes a quick sip and pushes her glass away. "Who has to drink?" she says.

She thinks he means they should drink coffee, or Cokes. But he gets up and goes to the dresser where he keeps his clothes, opens a drawer, and says, "Come over here."

"I don't want to look at any of that stuff," she says.

"You don't even know what it is."

"Sure I do."

Of course she doesn't—not specifically.

"You think it's going to bite you?"

Brenda drinks again and keeps looking out the window. The sun is getting down in the sky already, pushing the bright light across the table, to warm her hands.

"You don't approve," Neil says.

"I don't approve or disapprove," she says, aware of having lost some control, of not being as happy as she was. "I don't care what you do. That's you."

"I don't approve or disapprove," says Neil in a mincing voice. "Don't care what you do."

That's the signal, which one or the other had to give. A flash of hate, pure meanness, like the glint of a blade. The signal that the fight can come out into the open. Brenda takes a deep drink, as if she very much deserved it. She feels a desolate satisfaction. She stands up and says, "Time for me to go."

"What if I'm not ready to go yet?" Neil says.

"I said me, not you."

"Oh. You got a car outside?"

"I can walk."

"That's five miles back to where the van is."

"People have walked five miles."

"In shoes like that?" says Neil. They both look at her yellow shoes, which match the appliquéd-satin birds on her turquoise sweater. Both things bought and worn for him!

"You didn't wear those shoes for walking," he says. "You wore them so every step you took would show off your fat arse."

SHE walks along the lakeshore road, in the gravel, which bruises her feet through the shoes and makes her pay attention to each step, lest she should twist an ankle. The afternoon is now too cold for just a sweater. The wind off the lake blows at her sideways, and every time a vehicle passes, particularly a truck, an eddy of stiff wind whirls around her and grit blows into her face. Some of the trucks slow down, of course, and some cars do, too, and men yell at her out of the windows. One car skids onto the gravel and stops ahead of her. She stands still, she cannot think what else to do, and after a moment he churns back onto the pavement and she starts walking again.

That's all right, she's not in any real danger. She doesn't even worry about being seen by someone she knows. She feels too free to care. She thinks about the first time Neil came to the Furniture Barn, how he put his arm around Samson's neck and said, "Not much of a watchdog you got here, Ma'am." She thought the *Ma'am* was impudent, phony, out of some old Elvis Presley movie. And what he said next was worse. She looked at Samson, and she said, "He's better at night." And Neil said, "So am I." Impudent, swaggering, conceited, she thought. And he's not young enough to get away with it. Her opinion didn't even change so much the second time. What happened was that all that became just something to get past. It was something she could let him know he didn't have to do. It was her job to take his gifts seriously, so that he could be serious, too, and easy and grateful. How was she sure so soon that what she didn't like about him wasn't real?

When she's in the second mile, or maybe just the second half of the first mile, the Mercury catches up to her. It pulls onto the gravel across the road. She goes over and gets in. She doesn't see why not. It doesn't mean that she is going to talk to him, or be with him any longer than the few minutes it will take to drive to the swamp road and the van. His presence doesn't need to weigh on her any more than the grit blowing beside the road.

She winds the window all the way down so that there will be a rush of chilly wind across anything he may have to say.

"I want to beg your pardon for the personal remarks," he says.

"Why?" she says. "It's true. It is fat."

"No."

"It is," she says, in a tone of bored finality that is quite sincere. It shuts him up for a few miles, until they've turned down the swamp road and are driving in under the trees.

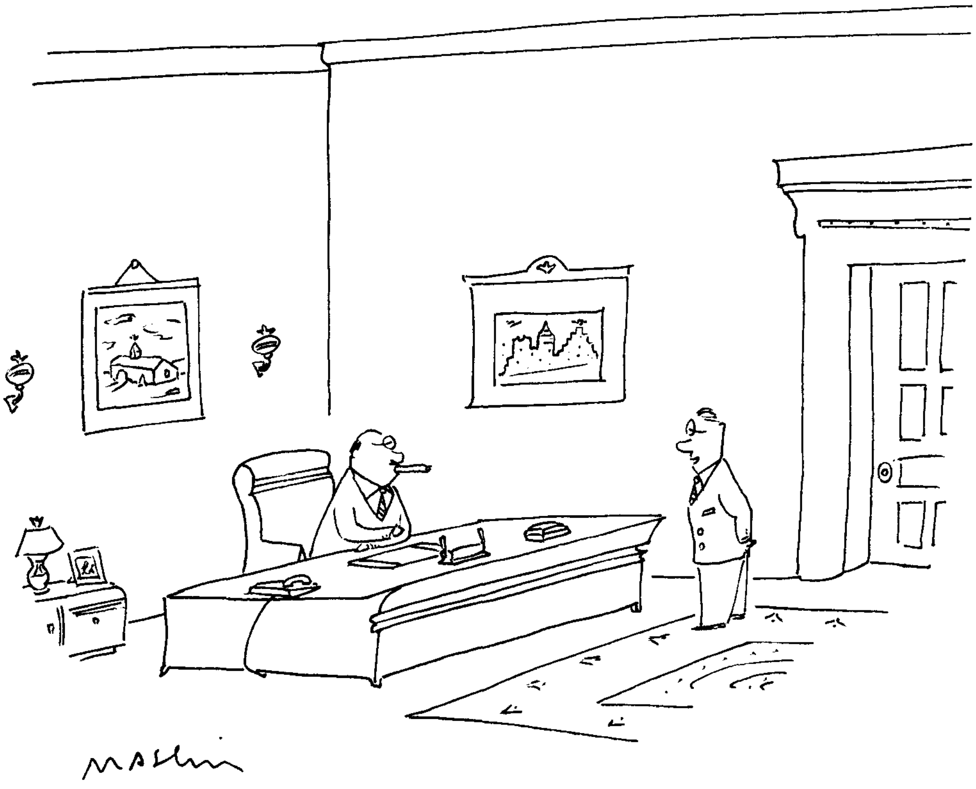
"If you thought there was a needle there in the drawer, there wasn't."

"It isn't any of my business what there was," she says.

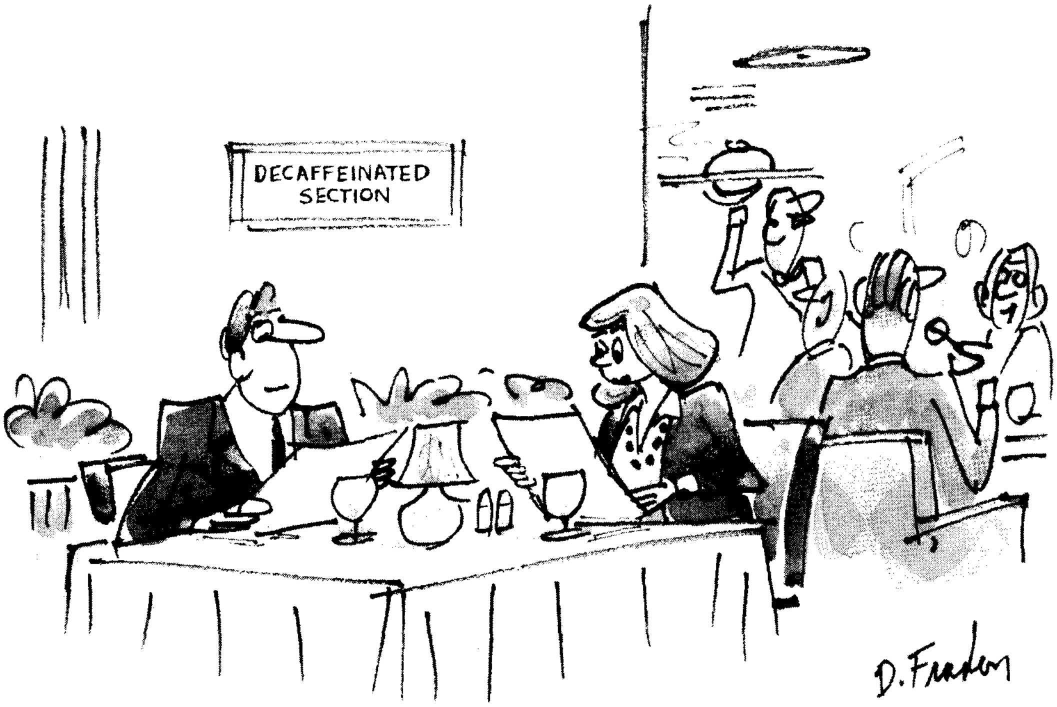
"All that was in there was some Percs and Quaaludes and a little hash."

She remembers a fight she had with Cornelius, one that almost broke their engagement. It wasn't the time he slapped her for smoking marijuana. They made that up quickly. It wasn't about anything to do with their own lives. They were talking about a man Cornelius worked with at the mine, and his wife, and their retarded child. This child was just a vegetable, Cornelius said; all it did was gibber away in a sort of pen in a corner of the living room and mess its pants. It was about six or seven years old, and that was all it would ever do. Cornelius said he believed that if anybody had a child like that they had a right to get rid of it. He said that was what he would do. No question about it. There were a lot of ways you could do it and never get caught, and he bet that was what a lot of people did. He and Brenda had a terrible fight about this. But all the time they were arguing and fighting Brenda suspected that this was not something Cornelius would really do. It was something he had to say he would do. To her. To her, he had to insist that he would do it. And this actually made her angrier at him than she would have been if she believed he was entirely and brutally sincere. He wanted her to argue with him about this. He wanted her protest, her horror, and why was that? Men wanted you to make a fuss, about disposing of vegetable babies or taking drugs or driving a car like a bat out of hell, and why was that? So they could have your marshmallow sissy goodness to preen against, with their hard showoff badness? So that they finally could give in to you, growling, and not have to be so bad and reckless anymore? Whatever it was, you got sick of it.

In the mine accident, Cornelius could have been crushed to



"While I do represent your disgruntled employees, Mr. Hollingwood, I am not a disgruntled employee myself."



death. He was working the night shift when it happened. In the great walls of rock salt an undercut is made, then there are holes drilled for explosives, and the charges are fitted in; an explosion goes off every night at five minutes to midnight. The huge slice of salt slides loose, to be started on its journey to the surface. Cornelius was lifted up in a cage on the end of the arm of the scaler. He was to break off the loose material on the roof and fix in the bolts that held it for the explosion. Something went wrong with the hydraulic controls he was operating—he stalled, tried for a little power and got a surge that lifted him, so that he saw the rock ceiling closing down on him like a lid. He ducked, the cage halted, a rocky outcrop struck him in the back.

He had worked in the mine for seven years before that and hardly ever spoke to Brenda about what it was like. Now he tells her. It's a world of its own, he says—caverns and pillars, miles out under the lake. If you get in a passage where there are no machines to light the gray walls, the salt-dusty air, and you turn your headlamp off, you can find out what real darkness is like, the darkness people on the surface of the earth never get to see. The machines stay down there forever. Some are assembled down there, taken down in parts; all are repaired there; and finally they're ransacked for usable parts, then piled into a dead-end passage that is sealed up—a tomb for these underground machines. They make a ferocious noise all the time they're working; the noise of the machines and the ventilating fans cuts out any human voice. And now there's a new machine that can do what Cornelius went up in the cage to do. It can do it by itself, without a man.

Brenda doesn't know if he misses being down there. He says he doesn't. He says he just can't look at the surface of the water without seeing all that underneath, which nobody who hasn't seen it could imagine.

NEIL and Brenda drive along under the trees, where suddenly you could hardly feel the wind at all.

"Also, I did take some money," Neil says. "I got forty dollars, which, compared to what some guys got, was just nothing. I swear that's all, forty dollars. I never got any more."

She doesn't say anything.

"I wasn't looking to confess it," he says. "I just wanted to talk about it. Then what pisses me off is I lied anyway."

Now that she can hear his voice better, she notices that it's nearly as flat and tired as her own. She sees his hands on the wheel and thinks what a hard time she would have describing what he looks like. At a distance—in the car, waiting for her—he's always been a bright blur, his presence a relief and a promise. Close up, he's been certain separate areas—silky or toughened skin, wiry hair or shaved prickles, smells that are unique or shared with other men. But it's chiefly an energy, a quality of his self that she can see in his blunt, short fingers or the tanned curve of his forehead. And even to call it energy is not exact—it's more like the sap of him, rising from the roots, clear and on the move, filling him to bursting. That's what she has set herself to follow—the sap, the current, under the skin, as if that were the one true thing.

If she turned sideways now, she would see him for what he is—that tanned curved forehead, the receding fringe of curly brown hair, heavy eyebrows with a few gray hairs in them, deep-set light-colored eyes, and a mouth that enjoys itself, rather sulky and proud. A boyish man beginning to age—though he still feels light and wild on top of her, after Cornelius's bulk settling down possessively, like a ton of blankets.

He turns the car around, he points it ready to drive back, and it's time for her to get out and go across to the van. He takes his hands off the wheel with the engine running, flexes his fingers, then grabs the wheel hard again—hard enough, you'd think, to squeeze it to pulp. "Christ, don't get out yet!" he says. "Don't get out of the car!"

She hasn't even put a hand on the door, she hasn't made a move to leave. Doesn't he know what's happening? Maybe you need the experience of a lot of married fights to know it. To know that what you think—and, for a while, hope—is the absolute end for you can turn out to be only the start of a new stage, a continuation. That's what's happening, that's what has happened. He has lost some of his sheen for her; he may not get it back. Probably the same goes for her, with him. She feels his heaviness and anger and surprise. She feels that also in herself. She thinks that up till now was easy.

—ALICE MUNRO

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A native of Melbourne, Foster was an accompanist here this summer with the London Symphony Orchestra Chorus. He won.—*Daytona Beach (Fla.) News-Journal.*

Foster 3—London Symphony Orchestra Chorus 0.

A REPORTER AT LARGE

DRY SEASON

AT ten to six on an April evening, the street lamps go on in the main square of Granada, Nicaragua's former capital, and the bells of the cathedral begin tolling for vespers, in counterpoint to the bells of La Merced, an eighteenth-century church a few blocks away. There is still color in the sky from a lurid sunset—the kind of sunset that often follows a smoggy day in Jersey City or Los Angeles, although the smog here during the dry season is of natural origin. It's a pall of smoke from the stubble that the peasants are burning in their fields, which mixes with dust clouds from the roads and ash from the volcanoes. It hangs over the country until the first rains dissolve it—ripping down the Sandinistas' black-and-red May Day banners and, impartially, the yellow-and-white paper festoons that decorate Nicaraguan streets for Easter.

The only beverage in constant supply throughout April is the mellow Nicaraguan rum. Milk is particularly scarce, and Brahman cattle, emaciated by the lack of grass, wander along the highways, herded by men on emaciated horses, or by little boys who turn their fathers' Army caps visor-back and suck on plastic water bags. As you drive north, toward the city of Matagalpa and the mountainous, fertile war zone northeast of it, the parched grandeur of the landscape resembles that of Africa. Everything vertical has the same keenness to its silhouette; the stones of the riverbeds lie exposed, and birds of prey hang over the gorges like the cutouts of a mobile. Here and there, a single tree blooms with the violent-orange flower named for Cortés's unhappy concubine, Malinche.

The religious processions of April that retrace the Via Crucis, and particularly the funerals—for which the same brass bands play the same dirges—are strenuous and dusty. Soil backslides into the graves, and mourners following a casket on foot through unpaved streets choke on a fine silt that also clogs the drains of diplomats' swimming pools in Managua and smothers the bean plants in the shantytowns. While every village has its cemetery, not every cemetery gate has a motto as apposite to the season as that of the city of León: "*Mors omnia aequat.*"

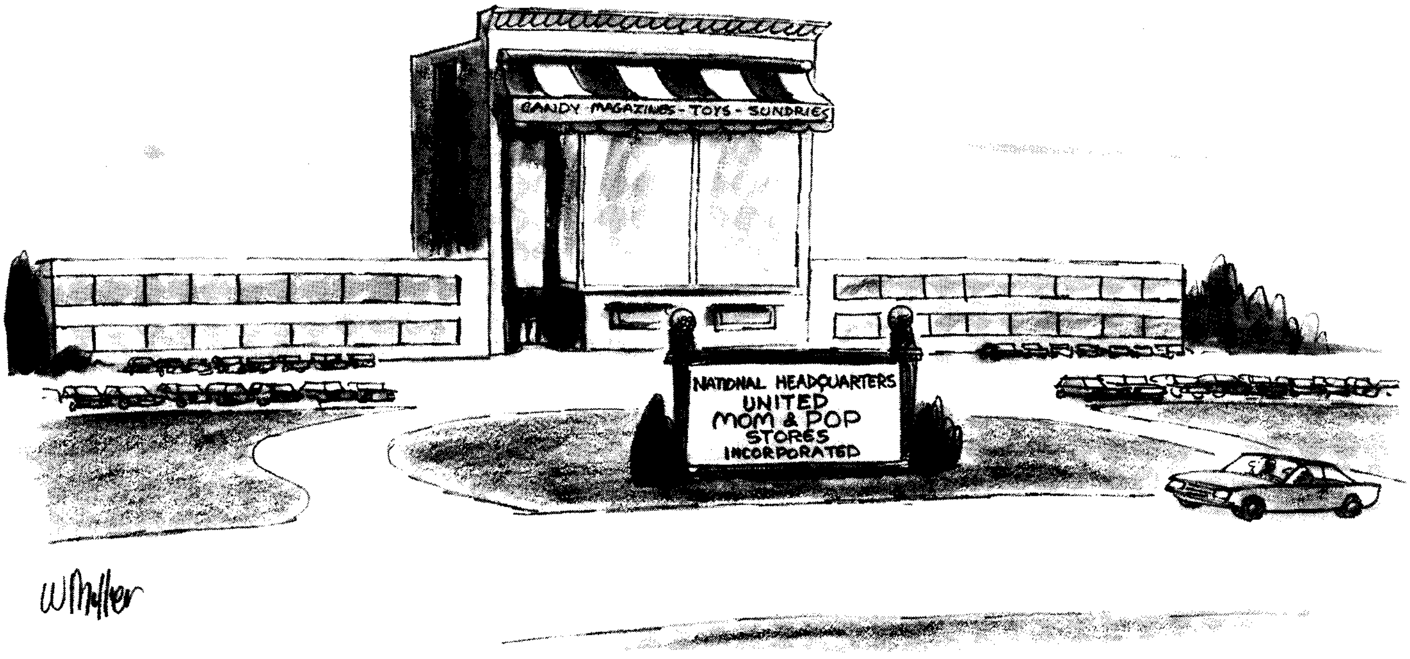
April is officially too hot for the national sport, baseball—a legacy of two lengthy United States Marine occupations in the first third of the century. You often see platoons of soldiers playing in a sandlot, or gangs of boys managing to pitch, and even bat, one of the tough-skinned Nicaraguan grapefruits (for which the Nicaraguan word is *grapefruit*). But the World Series ends at the Augusto Sandino Stadium in Managua (formerly the Anastasio Somoza Stadium) about the time that they're dusting off home plate at Wrigley Field.

At the stadium of Managua's sprawling Central American University, a thornbush had pushed through the fence into the outfield, and I often saw a lone runner dodging its creepers as he did his laps. He was a big man, towheaded, muscular, dogged, oblivious of a bad sunburn, and there was always a lone spectator—a spindly, dark-skinned Nicaraguan, in pressed trousers—staring at him from the shady grandstand. This runner proved to be a journalist for an American news magazine, training privately for a month of forced marches with the Contras, and the spectator was his driver. But as a couple they reminded me of the figures on a billboard half a mile from the United States Embassy, where the road forked left toward the government ministries and right toward the earthquake-blasted center of the capital. The billboard pictured a similarly fair and outsized Yankee—wearing manacles, however, and being led on a rope by a slight and elegant Nicaraguan soldier, whom at first I mistook for a woman. Its slogan read, "More than one of your armies, blond invader [*invasor rubio*], will have bitten the dust of my wild mountains." The image was a blowup of a news photograph taken of the American Eugene Hasenfus shortly after the Sandinistas shot him down over their territory in a plane loaded with weapons and supplies that had been destined for the Contras, and it had served as an early piece of evidence that the C.I.A. was contravening the Boland Amendment. If the billboard was kitschy in its fervor, it also had a wry bravado that made you want to have your picture taken under it—and not necessarily for the same reasons that it attracted the politically committed American Veterans for Peace, Witnesses for Peace, Christians for Peace, volunteer glassblowers, librarians, poets, coffee pickers, pediatricians, 4-H presidents, former nuns, and constitutional lawyers who demonstrated outside the United States Embassy every Thursday morning and then often walked down the highway to pose under it. As an idea, at least, it was in a category with certain ruins, and with man-made wonders, like Mt. Rushmore or the Sphinx: monuments to impossibility. It asked you, as they do, to contemplate how little man is, how prepotent nature is, how sovereign time is, and yet how great is the power of an obsessive determination.

DOLLS
Julie Reece Deaver

Granada's plaza, as the lamps brighten around it, begins to look like a murky painting in a gilt frame. At its center, blurred but glowing, are a pair of rustic refreshment kiosks; a white stone bandstand in the style of a neoclassic temple; and two statues cut from the same white stone. One commemorates Granada's declaration of independence from Spain, in 1811. The other, erected by the Rotary Club in the nineteen-sixties, portrays a young woman whose children and shirtwaist cling to her ample bosom, and bears the inscription "*A la madre. Toda abnegación y amor.*"

During the day, this public garden provides the town with a central well of shadow, just as the courtyards of the thick-walled houses provide wells of light. The paths are lined with mango


CANDY-MAGAZINES-TOYS-SUNDRIES
NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS UNITED MOM & POP STORES INCORPORATED
W Miller

• •

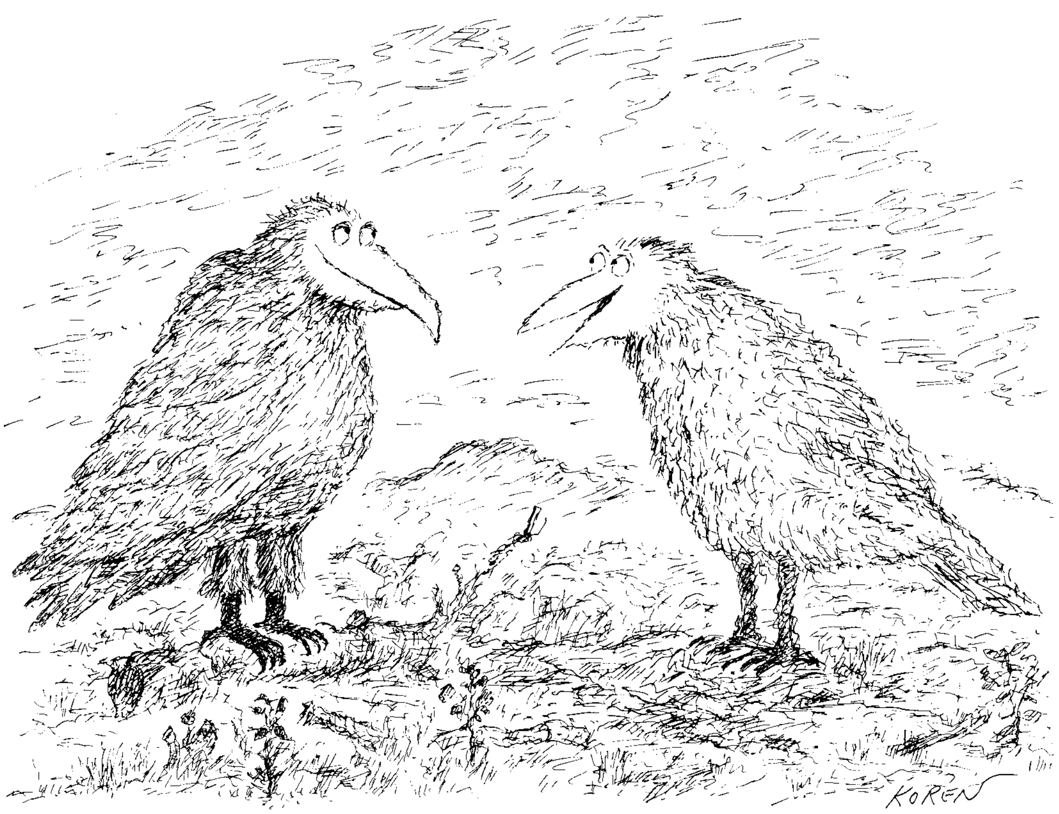
trees and bougainvilleas, and vaulted over by the fronds, each a yard long, of a grove of royal palms, ten stories high, whose trunks shimmer at dusk like a stand of birches.

A plywood barricade, inexplicably free of political graffiti, runs along the east side of the square. A weathered loggia, in the Spanish style, with thick-cut arches, shades the entrance to the Palacio Municipal, where Granada's Sandinista government has its offices. The guards at the city hall refer to the mayor as *el doctor*, but he asks you to call him Anibal, and his last name is Morales. Anibal is a physician in his late thirties, a divorced father, and a man who likes working with the soil. He wears a full, curly, Fidel-style beard, and the coincidence of this sort of beard with intense, manipulative eyes often predicts a character like Anibal's: that of the revolutionary didact, who is often a solitaire. The Mayor says, "*Las ideas valen más que los hombres*"—"Ideas are worth more than men"—and yet he entered first one profession and then another that would exercise his concern for the worth of "men" on a daily basis. For a man like Anibal, perhaps, modern and educated and yet a Latin (he wears a crucifix and several lucky charms under his Army shirt), an idea is something that a woman can no longer be, or be expected to be: worth more than *he* is; pure, and deserving of a pure love.

Anibal presumed complete historical and ideological ignorance in his interlocutor; fixed me with a mistrustful gaze but smiled at the end of every sentence; repeated my name for rhetorical effect, or in a pastoral fashion; and started at the beginning.

Francisco Hernández de Córdoba founded Granada in 1524. Its wealth originally came from ranching, from the export of its indigo, tallow, and salted meat, and from its command of the trade on Lake Nicaragua—a vast inland sea that stretches ninety miles to the south, connecting with the San Juan River and, ultimately, with the Caribbean. The aristocrats among the conquerors settled in Granada, and those of lower ranks were dispatched to León, which lay eighty-five miles to the northwest, and had been founded the same year. León became the seat of the colonial administration, and it had a middle class of tradespeople and civil servants, while Granada did not. León was also the seat of a Jesuit university, which acted as a conduit for the intellectual and revolutionary ferment taking place in Europe and in North America at the end of the eighteenth century.

The bitter enmity between the two cities was something like that between a pair of twins in a story by, say, Stendhal, who would surely have worked up your sympathies for the younger one, the romantic and Republican, but would have disillusioned you about him in the end. The ruling class of Granada stood for the old feudal order, liked to frighten its peons with tales of the godless radicals in red armbands coming to devour them, and ousted the Spanish simply to pick up their sceptre. The burghers of León, however, were infected with the liberal faith in moral and economic progress, and looked to the United States as an example of a rational and enlightened constitutional democracy and as a natural ally of their own revolution. They misunderstood the expansionist policy outlined in the Monroe Doctrine—"America for the Americans"—as a message of solidarity, a fraternal recognition. And it's helpful to



"*Do you have lunch plans?*"

• •

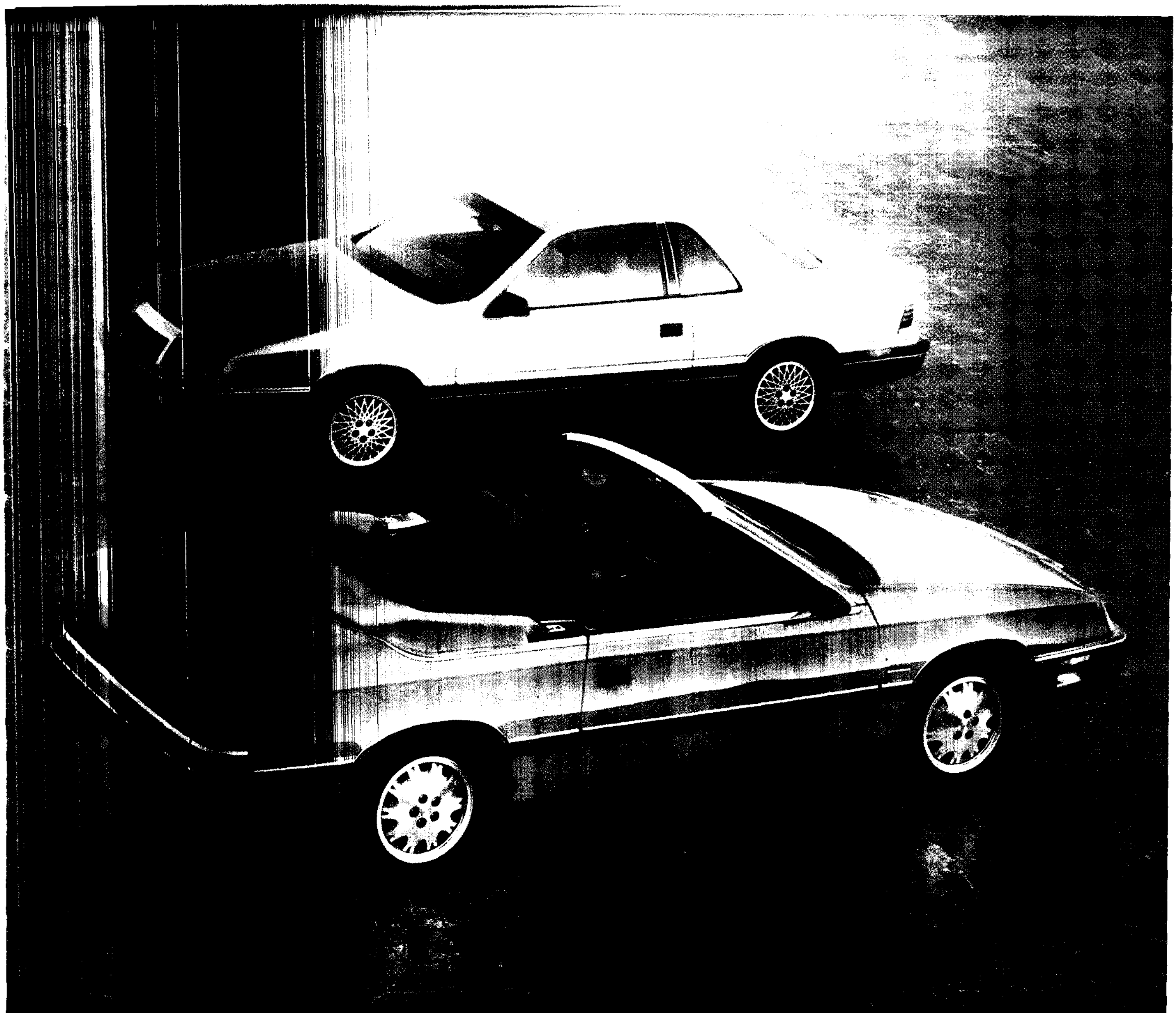
remember that Nicaragua's still active and somewhat perverse esteem for and sense of affinity with the United States had this romantic and one-sided beginning.

Early nineteenth-century Nicaraguan history is a chronicle of nearly permanent civil war between the Legitimists of Granada and the Democrats of León, although Miguel Vijil, the present Nicaraguan Minister of Housing, who is a student of the period, suggests that there was probably as much *localismo* as ideology behind the conflict—that it was a "blood feud." In the early years of this century, after a long and relatively stable lull, the two parties, now renamed Conservatives and Liberals, faced off again. War and inflation devastated the economy, and the United States government arranged bank loans to the Conservative regime that it had leveraged into power. But the money was appropriated by corrupt politicians, and the United States, before it would float new loans, placed monitors in the National Bank and at the Customs House. In 1912, Liberals and dissident Conservatives, united by a spirit of nationalism (or of national *localismo*), staged a revolt, and when it appeared that they might win President Taft acted "to protect American lives and property" by sending in a detachment of Marines. The Marines occupied Nicaragua from 1912 to 1925, withdrawing only when the Conservatives finally seemed able to rule without them. But the Party's internal power struggles gave the Liberals a chance to regroup, and in 1926 the Marines returned, to supervise an election that the Liberals won—in theory. All the hostile factions subscribed to a truce dictated by the Americans—all except one Liberal general, Augusto Sandino, who happened to have been the insurgents' most able leader. "You don't discuss sovereignty," he declared. "You take up arms to defend it."

Sandino led his followers into the mountains of the northern region of Las Segovias, and gradually evolved a defensive guerrilla strategy for eluding the Marines and pursuing the Nicaraguan Army troops, which went on for seven years. The Marines experimented with a new search-and-destroy technique—aerial bombardment—which devastated a number of peasant communities and imbued Nicaraguans with a deep resentment and fear of Yankee *prepotencia* but didn't succeed in flushing Sandino from his stronghold. They also began training a Guardia Nacional, which was eventually supposed to operate independently of either party and of the Army, and which Washington hoped would be capable of securing the country against further upheavals. The officers and the troops of this new police force were recruited in large measure from the élite Army units who had fought against Sandino alongside the Marines—so as an institution the Guardia had from its inception a pro-American and anti-nationalist bias. It is worth noting that when the Americans supervised another "free election," in 1932, and Juan Sacasa, the Liberal leader of the 1926 insurrection, won, it had by then been made quite clear that the real commander-in-chief of Nicaragua was the President of the United States.

Having accomplished their objectives in Nicaragua, the Marines turned over the command of the Guardia to a Liberal politician named Anastasio Somoza, who had been educated in Philadelphia and was fluent in English. They then departed. Sandino had promised to lay down his arms when the last foreign invader had withdrawn from Nicaraguan soil and, in exchange for a general amnesty, and a land settlement for his followers, he signed a truce with the Sacasa government. In February of 1934, the guerrilla, short and wiry and wearing his famous hat, posed for a photograph with his arm around the shoulder of Somoza, tall and fat and wearing his dress uniform. A few days later, Somoza had Sandino assassinated, and the Guardia purged the peasant communities that had supported him.

Somoza's relationship to the Guardia was that of a debauched squire to his hunting dogs. He bred them for viciousness to their prey and loyalty to their master, and fed them on spoils. His reign of brutality and corruption, staunchly supported by the



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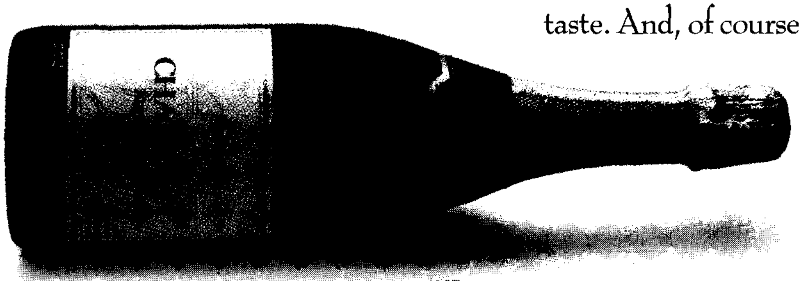

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United States, lasted until 1956, when, at a reception in León while he was campaigning for "reëlection," he was assassinated, by a young poet named Rigoberto López. His dynasty was in place, however, and he was succeeded first by his older son, Luis, who died of natural causes, and then by his younger son, Anastasio—the only cadet at West Point, it has been remarked, who received an army as a graduation present. The greed of the third Somoza far exceeded that of either his father or his brother, and in the twenty-two years of his regime he gorged himself into a stupor on his country's resources. His last meal, in a sense, consisted of a large portion of the hundreds of millions of dollars in earthquake-relief funds sent to the country in 1972. Seven years later, he was overthrown by a vast popular uprising led and organized by the Sandinist National Liberation Front.

THE Legitimists of Granada were referred to by their nineteenth-century opponents as *serviles*, and they moldered as such provincial upper classes tend to do, their notions of fashionable decadence always being a little out of date. By the late nineteen-thirties, for example, their society boasted the sort of neurasthenics one meets in the tales of the Spanish writer Ramón del Valle-Inclán, who were themselves, at the turn of the century, ten years behind the French and the English. A homosexual poet who invented his own language (Astral) is fondly remembered in Granada, as is an aesthete who maintained a private corps de ballet, to dance for him in the nude, and a spinster who, to escape the vulgarity of the modern world, immured herself in her family mansion—where, I was told, she was surprised during the revolution by a young guerrilla, to whom she offered tea in a Meissen cup. The city was a bastion of right-wing opposition to Somoza (a Liberal parvenu), and it still harbors a number of aging grandees who are more disdainfully than purposefully opposed to the Sandinistas. One of them explained to me that he had stayed on to defend his "class position;" another because "nothing further could be taken" from him. And a pallid, lisping man with a courtly stoop, and a fine long nose and fingers, nodded toward a young woman in fatigues carrying her standard-issue AK-47 and observed, rather pleasurably, "You see what it has come to, Señorita. They have degraded the purity of Woman."

It was Don Quixote, I suspected, who had held up the magnifying mirror in which these Dons Gustavo, Armando, and Virgilio saw their futility as heroic and themselves as noble idealists living in a fallen world. And, perhaps because it had been disarmed, there was something comic, and even poignant, in their delusion. But it also lacked the vital quixotic element: fealty. They had ceased, consciously, to serve any higher feudal power or ideal, and so they had become snobs—which is the fate of most *serviles* in the modern world, and which is why, perhaps, despite grand manners, they so often give a vulgar impression. I was struck by the tackiness of the only detached private house on Granada's plaza—a large modern villa with concrete walls and flashy mosaic and wrought-iron trim. It belonged to the owner of a large soap factory, Don Francisco Chamorro, and it squared off at opposite corners with the only other contemporary building on the plaza—the bullet-pocked and flag-draped headquarters of the Frente Sandinista.

The loggia continues, raised, on the west side of the plaza, and here the lobby of the Alhambra, Granada's second-best hotel, flows out onto it, forming a little open-air terrace. This is a pleasant spot in which to recover from the heat of the day, even though the bar has by now run out of everything but rum and black coffee. If you're feeling depressed, the coffee is a bad choice. Coffee is Nicaragua's principal export crop, and the economy has fallen on such hard times that the Nicaraguans must now sell all their choicest beans and drink the refuse, which, when boiled with an understandable vengeance, produces sludge. The rum, however, is excellent.

THE UNBEARABLE LIGHTNESS OF BEING RICHARD GEPHARDT'S EYEBROWS

A visit to the city's markets makes it clear that Granada is self-sufficient in at least a few basic commodities: guava-wood rocking chairs, tire rims, vinegar, wooden ashtrays, piñatas, cord, gum balls, gray cotton pajama bottoms, charcoal, rag mops, fruit, and carbolic acid. Sugar and *frijoles* can be bought freely, but to buy meat or salted fish you have to stand in line and present a ration coupon. On a trip to the only supermarket in town, I found nine toasters for sale, along with twelve pairs of plastic shoes and twelve portable radios; the radios cost four hundred and fifty-five thousand cordobas apiece, or about a hundred dollars at the unofficial rate of exchange. (The largest Nicaraguan banknote was, when I was there, a thousand cordobas, so you also had to calculate the transportation costs of your money.) There was a good supply of blackboards, though, and they were a bargain—five thousand cordobas. The Sandinistas have waged an extensive literacy campaign throughout the country, and while their detractors claim that their statistics on new readers are inflated and that, in fact, the educational reforms have lowered the quality of teaching, there seems to be universal respect for the written word. You can't buy a notebook in Granada, though, and in one stationery shop I watched a young girl and her mother taking half an hour to decide between two ballpoints. The urchins beg you for pencils: "*Regálame un lápiz*"—a pencil to do their homework. But they never ask for money; while the poverty here is extreme, it presents itself without abjection.

The lobby of the Alhambra is deserted at this hour except for its staff and three loungers watching a Japanese monster movie on a console television. One of the three is a greasy young man in black who, with an air of distress, is working on a bottle of rum. His name is Spider Stacey, and he's the flutist of an Irish folk-punk group called the Pogues. Perched on his bony lap (his bare knees protrude from symmetrical holes) is a plump nine-year-old girl named Fátima, who earns a living selling cashew nuts. As far away from them as he can move his rocker and still see the picture sits a giant wearing a lavender polo shirt with a logo, and a pair of equally smart white jogging shoes, which have certainly come from the Dollar Store in Managua. The Dollar Store is a duty-free supermarket run by the government, where anyone in possession of American currency can buy consumer goods unavailable (legally) to Nicaraguans. While there are shortages even at the Dollar Store—Pampers and yogurt sell out almost instantly—you can buy such civilized comforts as Ritz crackers, bologna, dandruff shampoo, "lite" beer, cigarettes, Walkman batteries, and high-grade Nicaraguan coffee.

The giant is a Russian who never smiles or says as much as "*Buenos días*," and who seems to have been carved out of a three-hundred-pound block of stone, although it is impossible to judge whether he is saturnine as a result of having spent three years at the Alhambra or by nature. He has been working on a local water project with half a dozen colleagues, the desk clerk tells me. Unlike most of the *internacionalistas* in the country, who are volunteers, the Soviets have been posted here. The rooms of the hotel are not what the lobby might lead you to expect. They are mean little orange cells, whose sour air is always thick with mosquitoes, and between the hours of 2 and 4 A.M. there always seem to be a number of guests running up and down the tiled staircase to avoid them. As our cells face each other across an airshaft, I have often seen the Russians playing endless games of what seems to be Preference (a game said to be popular in the gulags). A junior member of the group admitted that he missed Kiev, and that the long terms of his posting were a hardship. As he had a vacation coming up—three days off for Holy Week—I extolled the beach at San Juan del Sur. He was inordinately amused. "We'll just stay here," he said. "That's tourism, and we're pack wolves."

This is the time of evening when a woman in hair curlers, with a brood of children ranging in age from nine months to seven years—the youngest diaperless and the eldest barefoot but wearing a T-shirt that says "Rodeo Drive"—sets up a charcoal brazier across the street from the Sandinista headquarters and begins cooking the only fast food you can buy in Granada. The delicious smells of her frying pork and plantains mingle with the odor of her kids' pee, with the dance-hall perfume of the bougainvilleas, and with the exhaust from a convoy of vehicles parked in front of the C.P.C.—the Centro Popular de Cultura—next door to the Alhambra. The convoy won't be pulling out for at least half an hour, but Nicaraguan drivers like to keep their motors running—a wanton expense of critically scarce gasoline that can be accounted for by the odds here against any given motor's starting twice in a row. Since 1985, when Ronald Reagan imposed the trade embargo on Nicaragua, there have been no spare parts for American machines (incubators, for some reason, have been hardest hit), and the country is fast becoming a reliquary for the cars and appliances that used to be advertised in *Life* thirty years ago. It is rather eerie to keep running into forgotten and dying beasts, like the Alhambra's Motorola television set, that were fixtures of your own childhood. It's a little like running into the parent of a friend from the neighborhood where you grew up—though in a dream, where his or her presence has some melancholy but obscure admonition for you. The Nicaraguan language is a similar sort of reliquary. "*No puedes regalarme un Chiclets?*" That is what the guard at Interpren, the government press office, said when she patted my armpits, checked my tape recorder, and wondered if I couldn't give her a piece of chewing gum. Even patriotic Nicaraguans have a reverent familiarity with the artifacts, images, and expressions of American life. One has the impression that the restless among them are living with their bags packed, and studying reruns of "The Dick Van Dyke Show" the way Emma Bovary studied manners at Vaubyessard.

VICTORIA
BAR
MORAHAN'S
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The vehicles in the convoy include a Soviet jeep; an antique yellow school bus like the buses now used, in the New York City area, to transport Chassidic day campers from Brooklyn to Putnam County; three trailers with corrugated sides bearing painted revolutionary slogans; a Mercedes 420-SEL with Costa Rican plates; a tourist bus; and several battered taxis. Each of them has a hand-lettered sticker on its windshield that says "Walker"—the title of a foreign film being shot for five million dollars (over twenty billion cordobas) behind the plywood barricade on the east side of the square. "Walker" has a young British director, Alex Cox; an American principal, Ed Harris, in the title role; and a catchy slogan for its future ad campaign: "Before Rambo, before Oliver North, there was Walker."

FÁTIMA, who had never heard of Rambo or Colonel North, was greatly amused when I asked her if she had heard of Walker before Alex Cox came to Granada. "*Cómo no?*" she said, laughing. "*El filibustero!*" She and the people of the five Central American republics that signed the

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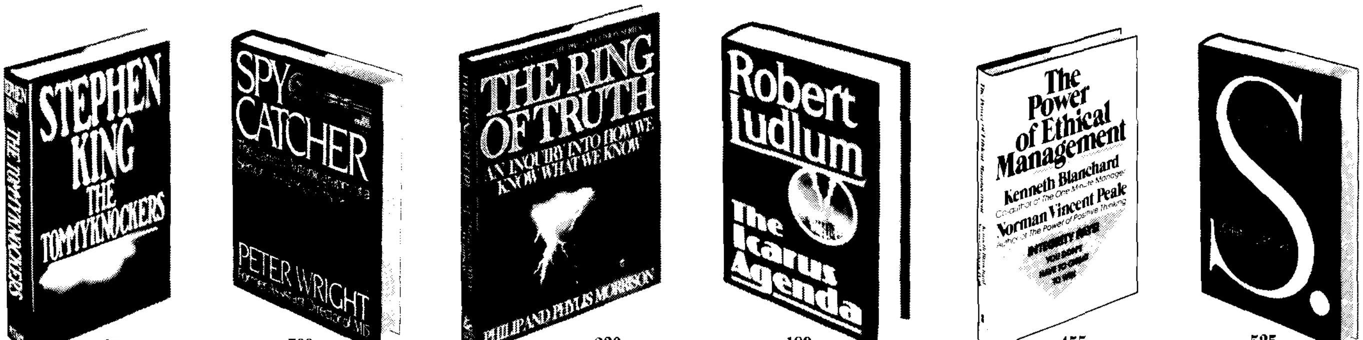
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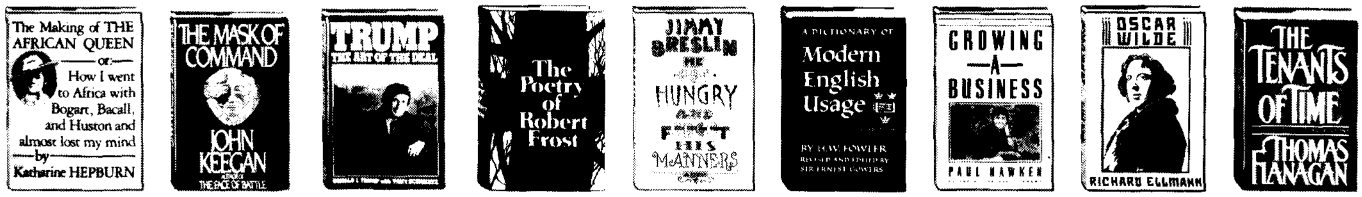
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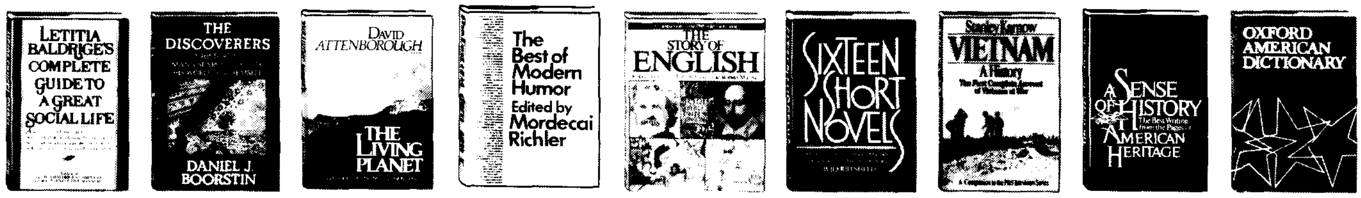
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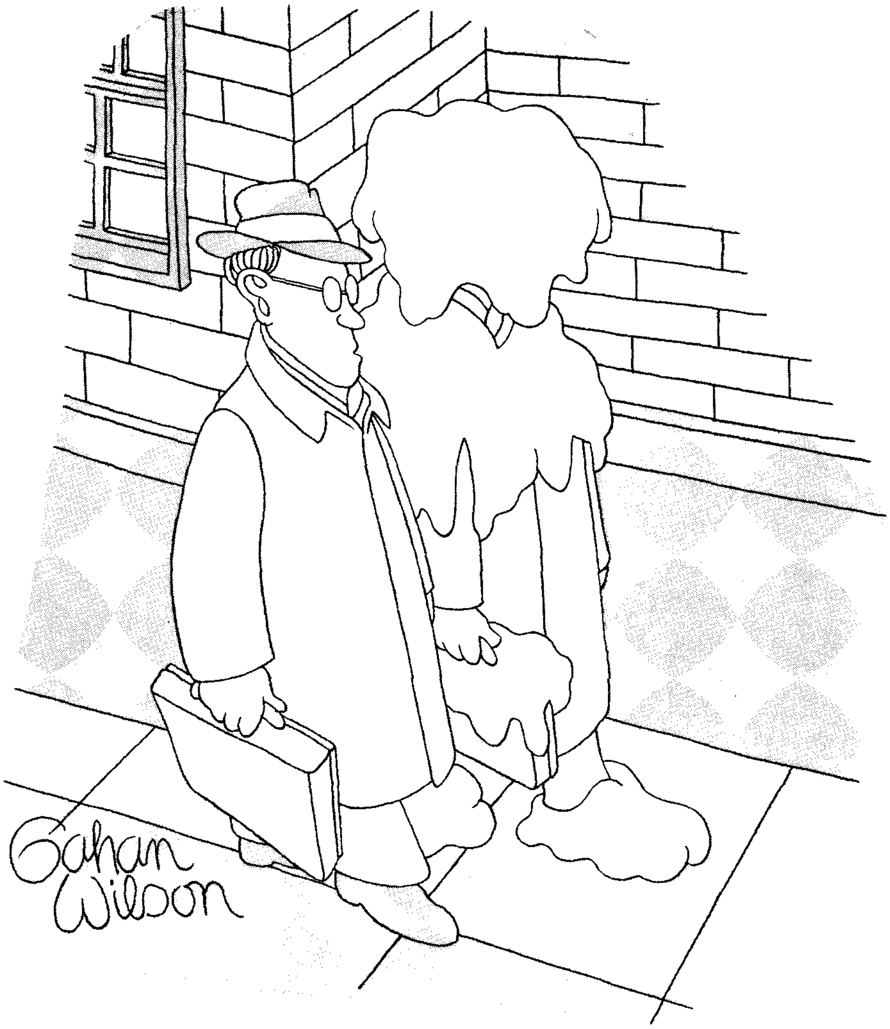


"Still snowing upstate?"

• •

Arias plan last August—and had united, under similar stress, to depose Walker from the Presidency of Nicaragua in 1857—still use the word "filibuster" in the sense that it had in the United States until the eighteen-eighties. Up to then, a filibuster (from the Dutch *vrijbuiter*, or "freebooter") was not a marathon speech aimed at obstructing a vote on a legislature floor but a lawless North American adventurer who, in the decade before the Civil War, invaded a country south of the border in defiance of our neutrality laws.

William Walker, who became known as the King of the Filibusters, was born in Nashville, Tennessee, in 1824. His father, James, was a Scottish immigrant who started out as a drygoods merchant and made a fortune in the insurance business. His mother belonged to a socially prominent family, the Norvells, who were descended from an officer in Washington's Army. The Walkers were members of a fundamentalist sect, however—the Disciples of Christ—and Albert Carr, one of Walker's biographers, speculates in "The World and William Walker" (1963) that it was as a matter of principle that the family did not own slaves, and that this fact contributed to his subject's strong (early) abolitionist sentiments.

Walker's mother was an invalid for most of his life, and his devotion to her had always endeared him to pious women friends of the family, as had the softness of his speech and manners. His father had pressed him to enter the ministry, for which he seemed suited, but he refused. His decision to study medicine was, perhaps, a reaction to the impotence that those who grow up with an invalid parent, for whom they can do nothing, invariably come to feel. After his graduation from the University of Nashville, he took a degree in medicine at the University of Pennsylvania, and then spent two years studying surgery in Edinburgh, Paris, and Heidelberg, and touring the Continent. His polish was much admired when he returned to Nashville. After his mother died, he practiced medicine only briefly, then decided to earn a law degree. When he had done so, he practiced law only briefly and then joined the staff of a New Orleans newspaper, the *Crescent*, as an editorialist and reporter on foreign affairs.

The *Crescent* was considered virtually a Yankee paper because of its aggressively liberal views, which were shaped, to a large extent, by Walker. (A genuine Yankee briefly on the paper's staff was Walt Whitman.) Walker covered the 1848 revolutions in Europe with great enthusiasm, and he was so stirred by the Hungarian uprising, led by Lajos Kossuth, that he later adopted Kossuth's flat-brimmed black hat as his own trademark. His contributions to the paper "were distinguished by a certain intensity of feeling," Carr writes. "He respected facts—a trait instilled in him by his medical and legal training—but the main quality of his writing was its heat."

Walker's law colleague and closest friend, Edmund Randolph, of the Virginia Randolphs, had in the meantime introduced him to New Orleans society, and he had fallen in love with a woman named Ellen Martin, who was deaf and mute, and for whose sake he studied sign language. Carr speculates that their engagement satisfied Walker's need for a love that was chivalrous and chaste, though the actress Marlee Matlin, who was playing Ellen in the film, and had researched the character, had decided that it probably also satisfied Walker's need to be dominated. Ellen Martin died suddenly in a cholera epidemic, however, and Walker suffered a breakdown of morale which left him deeply—perhaps pathologically—embittered. In his editorials he began to throw down "gauntlets . . . right and left," Carr notes, and embraced a "wild and joyless" radicalism that destroyed his paper.

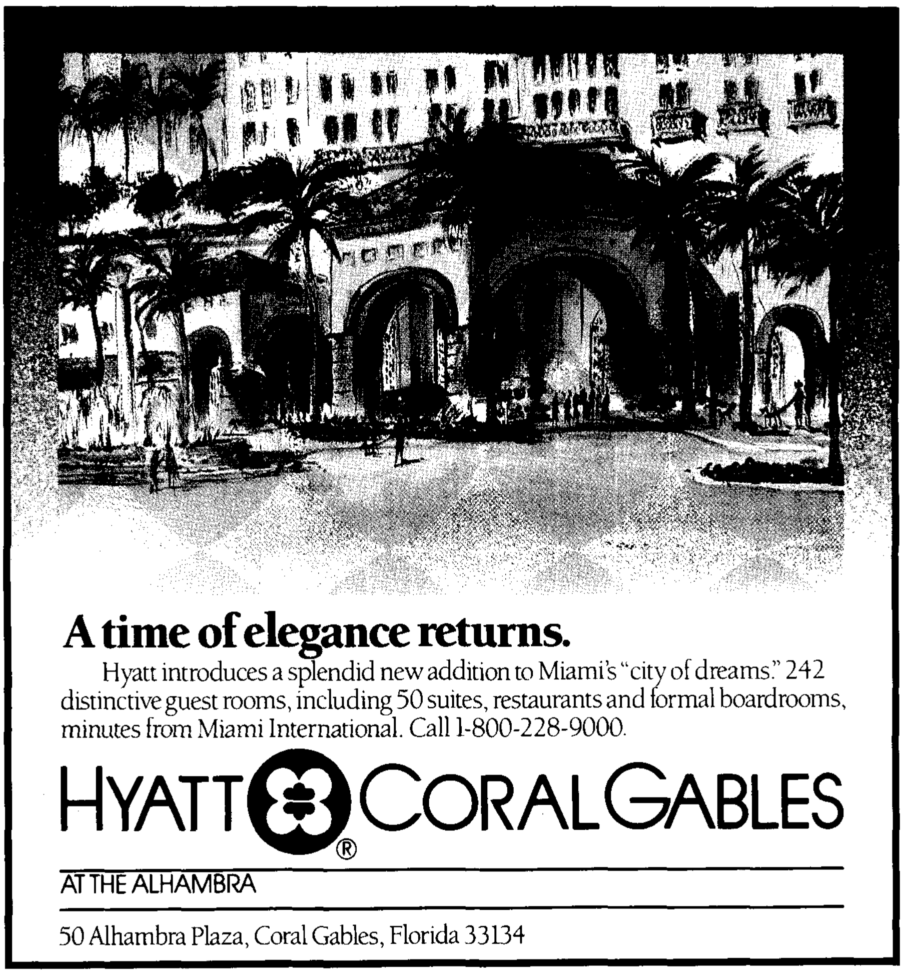
In 1849, the year of the Gold Rush, Walker migrated to San Francisco, where he worked as a journalist and made a name for himself crusading against the corruption of the city's judiciary and police force. He was tried for contempt of court, and the case became a cause célèbre, which

MUDA IS YOU. ISN'T IT?

encouraged him to parlay his reputation for integrity into a political career. As a delegate to the State Democratic Convention of 1854, he supported a controversial abolitionist candidate, David Broderick. But he couldn't resist what another of his biographers, William O. Scroggs, in "Filibusters and Financiers" (1916), calls "the filibustering fever"—an obsession with the "bigness" and "greatness" of the United States which was particularly virulent in California. "It is the fate of America ever to go ahead," a Californian wrote in 1854. "She is like the rod of Aaron that became a serpent and swallowed up the other rods. So will America conquer or annex all lands. That is her manifest destiny. Only give her time for the process."

As rods go, Walker was a very slight one: five feet five, a hundred and twenty pounds. He had close-set eyes and a snub nose and the requisite boyish air and self-righteous mien of those who appoint themselves the agents of Providence in Central America, frame their own foreign policy for the region, and have their illegal military activities in Nicaragua debated by Congress. The uniform Walker adopted for warfare in the tropics was a minister's black rep suit, and the rules of conduct he laid down for his army were those of a Sunday school. "Insulting the honor of a woman" was a capital offense, and he was nearly as intolerant of profanity and drunkenness. His apparent physical sissiness never failed to astonish his contemporaries, and the pop psychologists of the era were always at pains to explain how such an unimpressive and perhaps even "dubiously virile" bachelor and teetotaller could command the loyalty of roughneck mercenaries and subjugate a country the size of Louisiana. Some writers suggested that Walker's charisma was in his "hypnotic" eyes, and others cited his personal courage—if that, indeed, is what is required to walk as calmly into a hail of bullets as up to a railway ticket window. Perhaps Walker understood that to command awe as well as respect the man who appears to lack animal appetites must also appear to lack any animal fear of death.

Walker's first filibustering expedition, which failed, was an attempt to conquer the Mexican state of Sonora, south of what is now Arizona, with forty-five lowlifes recruited from the bars, docks, and goldfields of San Francisco. They did manage to seize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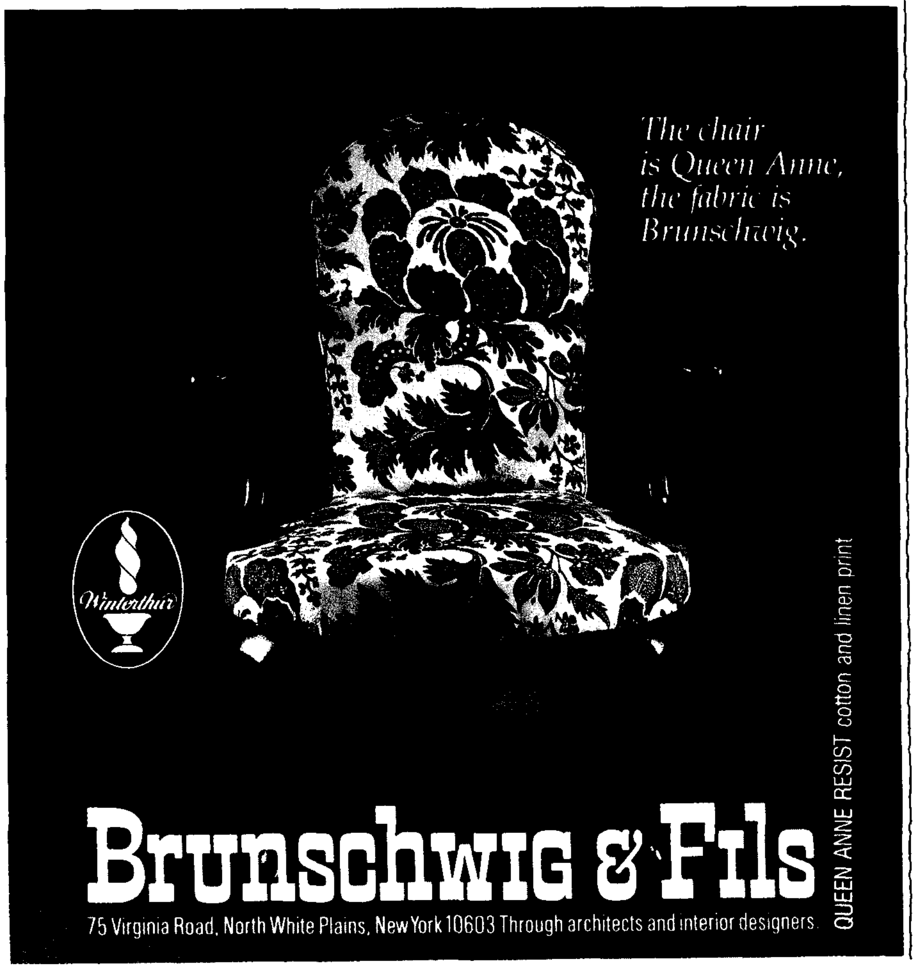
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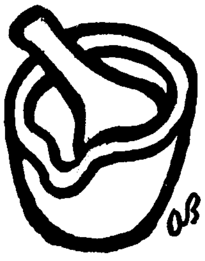
an undefended garrison at La Paz, in Baja California, where their leader proclaimed a Republic and appointed himself its president—a spectacle, Scroggs suggests, "that needs the pen of Cervantes to do it full justice." His promoters dispatched several hundred reinforcements but no provisions for them, and by the time Walker—who was now calling himself Colonel Walker—limped back across the border at San Diego, wearing one boot and one shoe, he had lost ninety per cent of his men to fever, starvation, desertion, enemy bullets, and his own incompetence.



In some respects, the Sonoran fiasco was a miniature of Walker's two-year war in Nicaragua. Both were conceived as missions to bring stability and democracy to troubled regions that were of potential economic and strategic importance to the United States; both had a farcical and, in terms of the destruction they wrought, tragic shape; and both, ironically, served to enhance Walker's prestige in the eyes of his countrymen.

The American public's admiration for the "aggressive individualism" of the filibusters does not appear to have diminished much since the federal prosecutor in San Francisco failed to muster a jury willing to convict Walker of the irrefutable charge against him—that of violating Mexico's neutrality. But the attitude of President Franklin Pierce toward private "freedom fighters" was not that of Ronald Reagan, and both the military commander of the Department of the Pacific and the civil authorities in San Francisco were ordered to keep Walker under surveillance and forestall any future filibustering expeditions. He had meanwhile turned his attention to Nicaragua, which was as much in the news then as it is now, largely thanks to the need for a cheap and secure transit route for gold and passengers between our East and West Coasts. One of Walker's backers, a rich Yankee newspaper entrepreneur named Byron Cole, went to Nicaragua to investigate the opportunities for a civilizing mission to the isthmus; and the filibuster's credentials impressed the Nicaraguan Liberals, who had reached a stalemate in their war with the Conservatives. Cole procured a carefully worded letter from the Liberal leader, General Francisco de Castellón, inviting Walker to the country as a peaceful "colonist," with the understanding that he was to act as the Liberals' champion. Once again, the filibuster had only a handful of men under his command: some sixty Gold Rush dropouts and professional black sheep. Nor was "the element of the absurd," as Carr calls it, missing from the scene of their departure. At the last moment, a revenue cutter came alongside Walker's arms-laden brig, the Vesta, and a federal sheriff, acting on behalf of an angry shopkeeper, to whom the filibuster owed some money, temporarily carried off its sails.

Walker succeeded in ending Nicaragua's civil war; assumed control of its armed forces, and then its Presidency; declared English the co-official language; confiscated large tracts of farmland which he sold to his followers and backers; and, when the Nicaraguans united with their neighbors to depose him, devastated their country in the name of democracy. This took him two years. He spent the next three years raising funds for and launching two abortive attempts to reconquer his lost fiefdom and writing his memoirs, a posthumous best-seller. From 1855, when he landed at Realejo, to 1860, when he was executed in Honduras, Walker was one of the most famous and most widely admired Americans of his age—a force that Presidents Pierce and Buchanan both had to reckon with in their conduct of foreign policy, and a wild card in the volatile poker game between pro- and anti-slavery parties in Congress. Some historians have suggested that if Walker had succeeded he might have postponed the Civil War, or even changed its outcome, for as soon as his plight demanded it he abandoned the cause of abolition, turned to the most reactionary elements in the South, and, in exchange for their promise of arms and money, declared that Nicaragua was to be a vast and fertile new field for slavery.

Walker was forced to seek help from these "ultras" in part because the Central Americans had found an unlikely ally of their own—possibly the one man able to strangle Walker's regime single-handed. This was Cornelius Vanderbilt. Vanderbilt had recognized the strategic value of Nicaragua as soon as gold was discovered in California, and he had organized a three-sided express service between San Francisco and New York which

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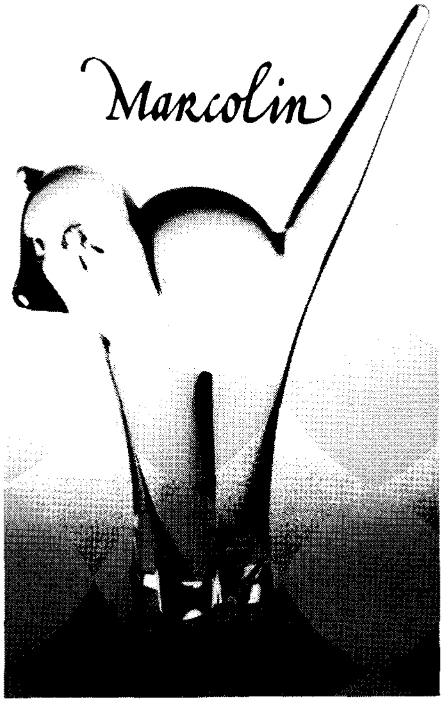

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transferred passengers from steamers to riverboats for the passage up the San Juan River into Lake Nicaragua, and then to coaches for the twelve-mile trip overland to the Pacific. Vanderbilt had for years been shortchanging the Nicaraguans on their share of the revenues from this traffic, and he now shortchanged Walker—although he also provided Walker with an essential link to his sources of men and supplies. It was his old friend Edmund Randolph who persuaded Walker that he should revoke Vanderbilt's contract and award it to Vanderbilt's rivals, Charles Morgan and C. K. Garrison. The Commodore's revenge was complex and exquisite: he performed a feat of prestidigitation on Wall Street, in the law courts, on Capitol Hill, and in the marketplace which sealed the ruin of his competitors by engaging them in a price war, and isolated Walker by routing a new, cut-rate coast-to-coast shuttle through Panama.

"Filibuster" was an epithet that Walker disliked, in part because of its association with the kind of unscrupulous, parvenu, mercenary self-interest that Vanderbilt embodied, and he never ceased to insist on the purity, even the gentility, of his own motives. Filibusterism, he concludes, in his book "The War in Nicaragua," which is written in the third person of a Caesar, "is not the offspring of hasty passion or ill-regulated desire; it is the fruit of the sure, unerring instincts which act in accordance with laws as old as the creation."

There is an echo of Milton in this rhetoric, which is voluptuous and yet puritanical at the same time. Walker was the model for other Yankee knights, who have seemed compelled to repudiate the greed and lust inherent in conquest. Nor is Walker's subsequent fall into obscurity in his own country the mystery that it may appear. He was one of those "pure products of America," as William Carlos Williams puts it, which enjoy a brief craze and then stop selling and become obsolete or run amok and are taken off the market—except in places like Central America.

THERE are no monuments to William Walker in Nashville, but there is a museum of Walker artifacts in Santa Rosa, Costa Rica; ubiquitous plaques commemorate his predations in Granada; and in Trujillo, Honduras, a large boulder stands in the courtyard of what is now a maternity hospital, marking the spot where Walker was executed by a firing squad on September 12, 1860, for attempting to use Honduras as a base for reconquering Nicaragua.

One day early in 1981, at nine in the morning, an hour at which the imminently expectant and new mothers of Trujillo were not prepared to receive visitors of the opposite sex, a party of well-dressed and somewhat inebriated men burst into the maternity ward, sending them diving for cover under their sheets. The ringleaders of this intrusion were Jack Binns, the outgoing American Ambassador to Honduras, and Juan Agurcia Ewing, the future Honduran Ambassador to Washington. It was on the American Embassy plane that the men had flown from the Honduran capital, and at an onboard bar—supplied by Agurcia—that they had kicked off their party. The guest of honor at this party was an American, the Deputy Chief of Mission, whose long unsatisfied desire to visit the grave of his namesake was finally being gratified.

William Walker, the incumbent Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, is a career foreign-service officer in his early fifties, who has red hair, freckles, and a certain reckless mirth that is generally described as "irrepressible." Until 1974, when he was posted to El Salvador, Walker had managed to "stay out of Central America," he told me last May—a place that he had imagined to be "an undifferentiated jungle mass filled with Graham Greene characters"—by asserting that his name would handicap him in his work there. He was surprised, however, to discover that his new base of operations, San Salvador, was "a lovely city with a terrific climate," and that his name was "an icebreaker at cocktail parties." He was subsequently appointed Deputy Chief of Mission in Honduras, and "Teguce" was another pleasant surprise. "There was a lot of interesting stuff going on—turmoil!" he said, with his easy laugh. "The occasional coup attempt." And he considered that, on the whole, "it was a lot more fun pushing the countries of Central America toward democracy" than it would have been "pursuing classical diplomacy in Europe."

In his present position at the State Department, Walker and his immediate boss, Elliott Abrams, have been responsible for administering President Reagan's policy of support for the Contras at the diplomatic level.

"There is no way we can't play a role there," Walker maintains, "sometimes at their invitation, sometimes for other reasons"—and to him an invitation isn't necessary when a regime is, like that of the Sandinistas, "threatening our national interest."

Early in 1987, William Walker was considered, by the State Department, for an ambassadorship, either in Honduras or Costa Rica. "But the Sandinistas made headlines of it!" he marvelled. " 'William Walker Returns! On the Same Mission!' " And, despite his implacable opposition to their regime, he considered the Sandinistas "paranoid" and "ridiculous" for regarding an attempt to install him in a neighboring United States Embassy as "part of an insidious plot to intimidate them."

But a former member of Congress, Michael Barnes, who had been the head of the House Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Affairs, had a different perspective on the matter. "One of the things the Reagan Administration did early on was to turn Latin-American policy over to the right-wing loonies," he said. "They didn't want the right-wingers meddling in our relations with the Soviets or the Chinese. Their basic attitude was 'Let's throw some red meat to the hard-core mad-dog right-wingers.' The meat was Latin America, and the mess we're in today results from it." And a senior Western diplomat in Managua, who requested anonymity, reflected that the Administration's obsession with the Sandinistas "suggests the degree to which our foreign policy has become a national-security policy." He went on to say, with a weary air, "I found myself attempting to raise the obvious implications of a 'Walker' ambassadorship at the State Department. What, I asked them, would you be saying with this nomination—not only to the Nicaraguans but to our allies down there, who share a perception of the nineteenth-century William Walker as the most infamous Yankee invader in their history? But, you know, they just laughed and said, 'How could anyone hold his name against poor Bill?' "

MIGUEL VIJIL, the Minister of Housing (and a descendant of the Granadan priest Padre Augustín Vijil, who had served as the first Walker's ambassador to Washington), was not one of the Sandinistas who believed that Reagan would order an invasion of Nicaragua last April. He said, half seriously, "invading us is a question of timing, like that of a love affair. The moment passes." But one *invasor rubio* did make it across the border—Alex Cox. And one of Cox's first announcements to his cast and crew when they had assembled in Managua from California, London, Mexico City, Rome, and New York, was that they were all going on a ten-mile forced march together, led by Ed Harris. And they did, with young actors fresh from their L.A. gyms helping to support hard-smoking British and Latins and overweight New Yorkers. Cox seemed determined that everyone share equally—or, at least, feel equally responsible for sharing—the discomforts of the production, if not the privations of the country.

In his own way, Cox was as monkishly austere a figure as the first William Walker. According to the personnel manifest, he had "no permanent address," and according to a friend in the cast he had only two possessions of any worldly value, both of them BMW motorcycles. Nor was there an ounce of fat on his body: he was pure ectomorph, with limbs like

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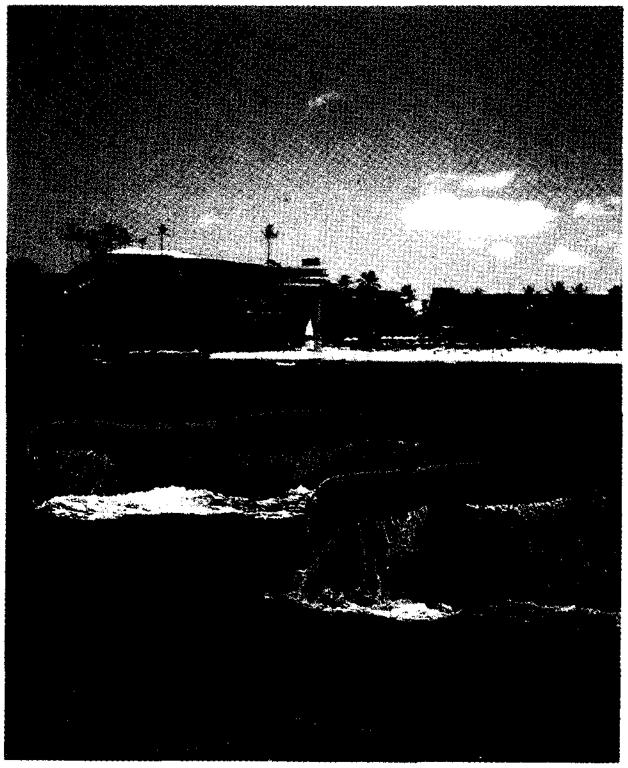

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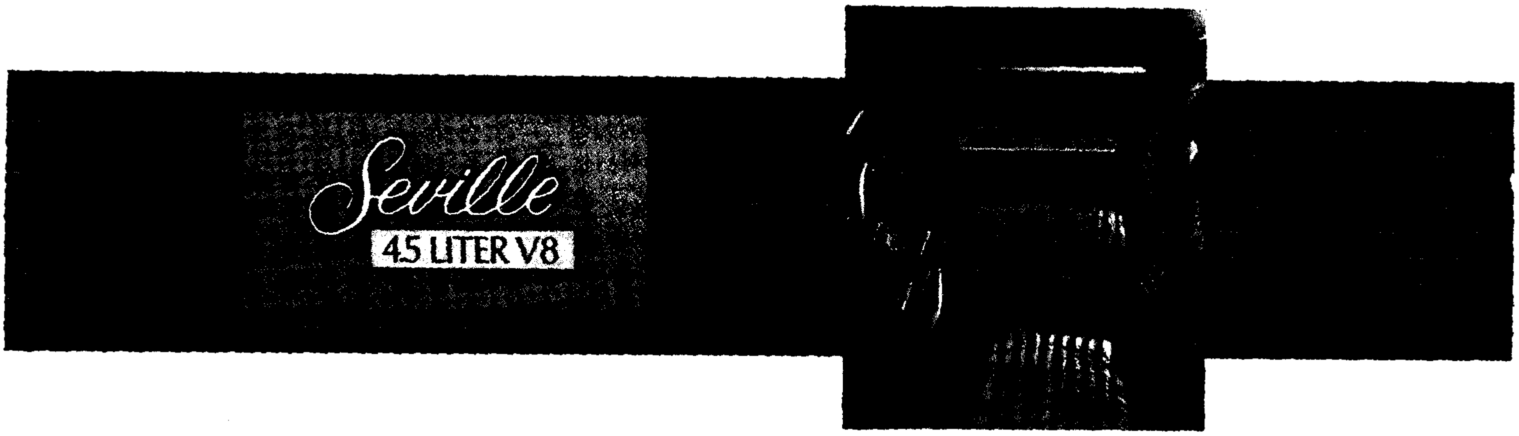

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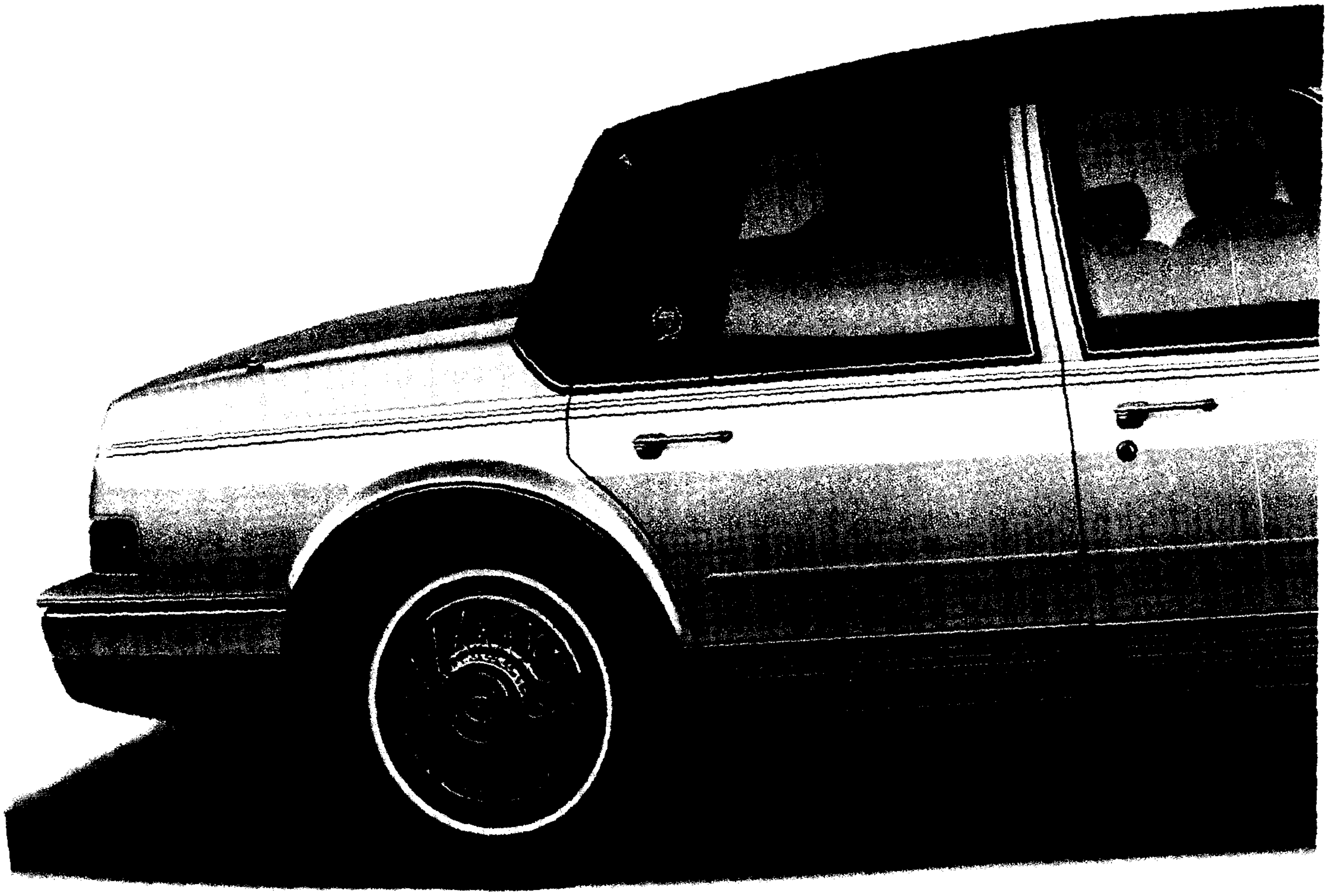

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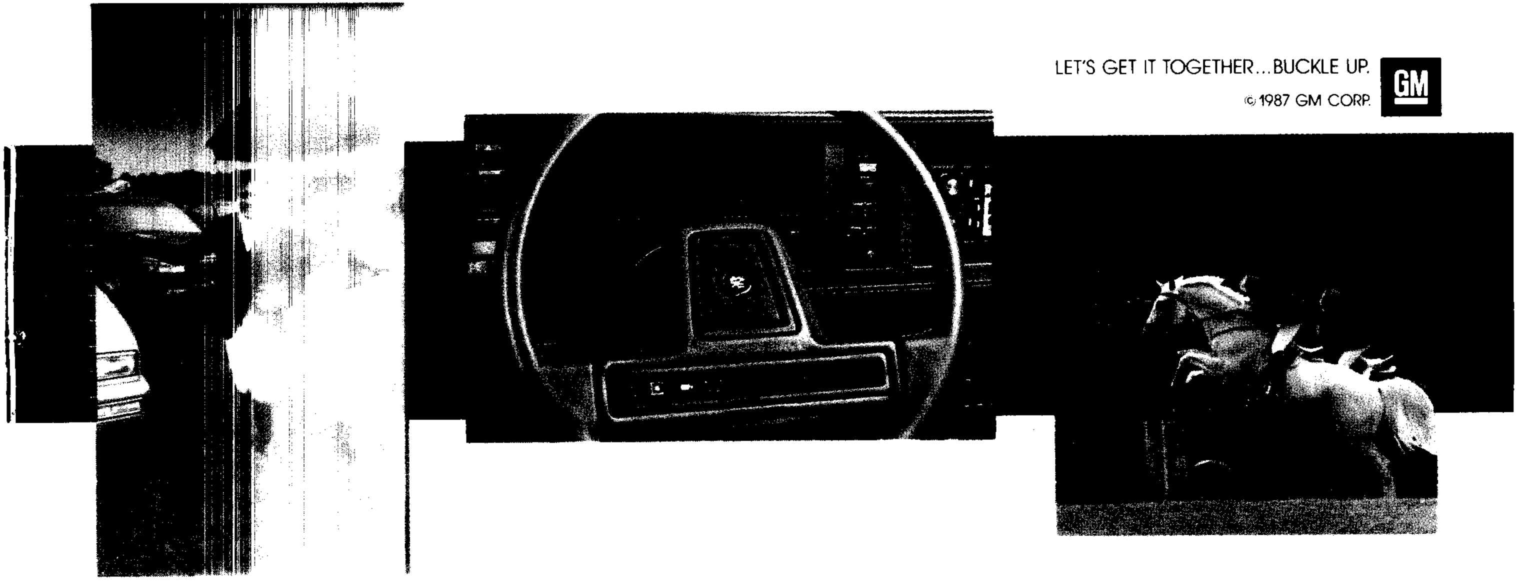

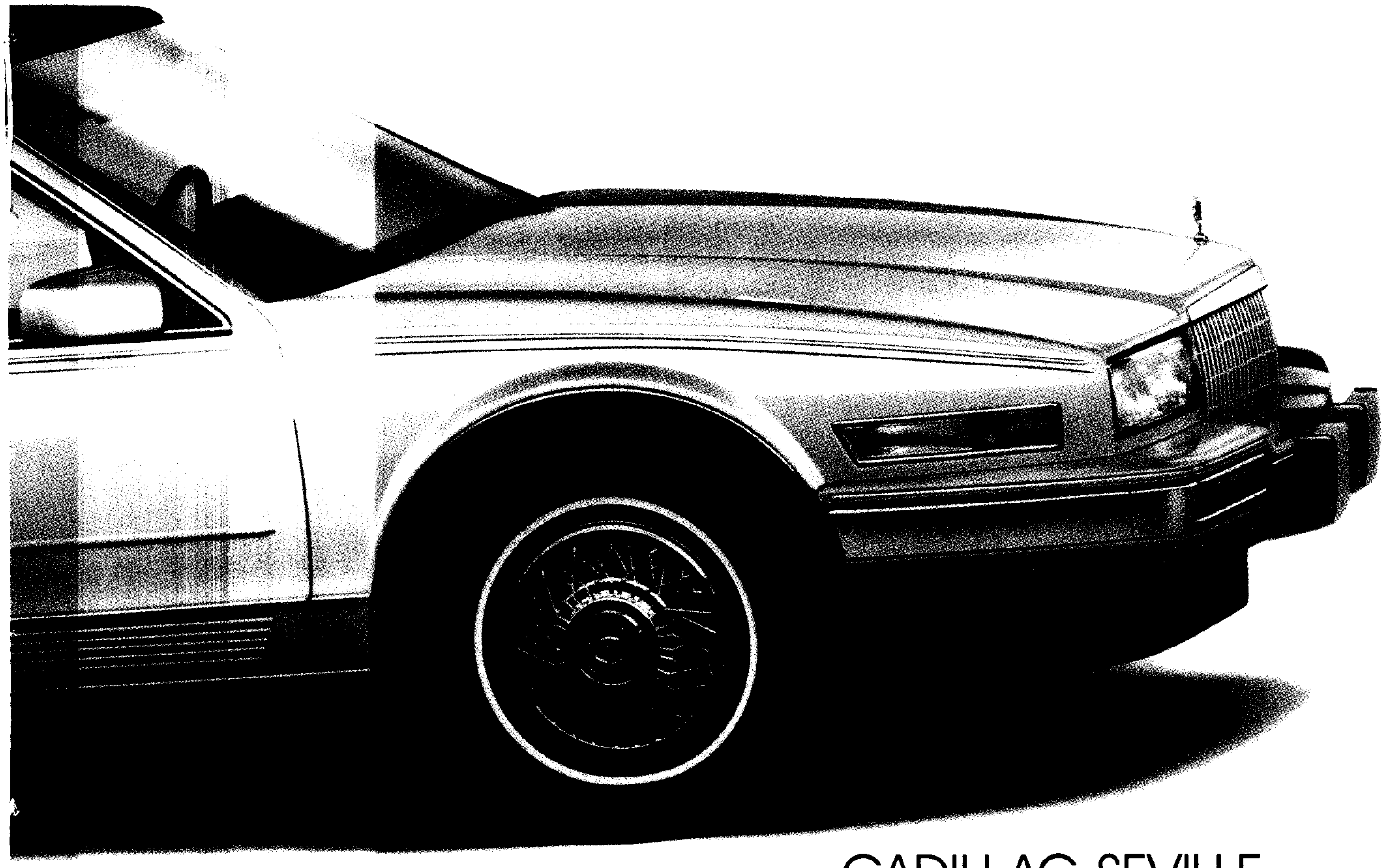

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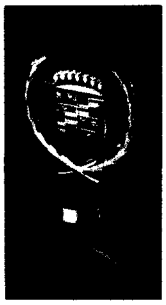

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Walker was thirty-one and Cox was thirty-two when they landed in Nicaragua with their bands of "Immortals," as Walker's men had been dubbed by their home-town press. Cox, too, had studied law—at Oxford—before emigrating to California. He attended the U.C.L.A. film school, and made his début as a director with "Repo Man," a low-budget comedy that has since become a midnight cult film. His second feature, "Sid and Nancy," was a portrait of the British punk-rock musician and heroin addict Sid Vicious and the American girl, Nancy Spungen, whom he murdered in their room at the Chelsea Hotel. A third film, "Straight to Hell," was a bust at the box office last summer. It was shot on a shoestring, as a lark, and even its wardrobe designer, Pam Tait, admitted that it was "god-awful," although she also explained that "we had a gas making it, and it was good for the bonding."

The bonds among the veterans of Cox's first three films made them an inner circle on the set of "Walker." They were intensely loyal to "Alex," considered him a genius, acknowledged that he was ruthless, and were proud to serve his purposes. Their loyalty was more a romantic phenomenon than a professional one, and it amused them that he thrived so shamelessly on conflict, tension, uncertainty, insolence, and even antagonism. "It gets nasty," Pam Tait said, "but there you have it." Like Walker, however, Cox occasionally revealed—and was perhaps expected to reveal—an almost maternal side to his character: the generalissimo would disappear, and in his place would be the sort of boyishly unworldly figure, eager to be loved, whom the first set of Immortals had called Uncle Billy.

For the most part, the actors and crew members who formed this nucleus were young people, in their late twenties and early thirties. A few of them were from working-class or minority backgrounds, but most of them were middle-class kids, like Cox himself, and had laundered their respectable childhoods on the stage, in the streets, or on the punk-music scene. Zander Schloss, a member of the Circle Jerks (a band), who sometimes claims a family connection to the Rothschilds, had lived the life of a vagrant in West Los Angeles. Joe Strummer, a diplomat's son and the former lead singer and rhythm guitarist for the

Clash, announced that he preferred "exile in Granada to fame in London." And Tait, a robust young woman with a North of England accent, who described herself as a member of the Alex Cox Gang, cheerfully summed up the cult movies she had worked on as "peepholes you open and close, flashing images to the initiated." She went on, "But what we all hate is the 'Masterpiece Theatre' bugaboo. We all hate 'style'—we're out to debunk people who subscribe to fashion magazines and copy rock stars." She herself renounced wearing black, as a gesture of contempt for "the kids in four-hundred-dollar leather jackets snorting their mothers' coke and making a mockery of what punk was about—being poor."

If punks made the rags, filth, fetishes, and flesh wounds of the indigent into a sort of combat uniform, there was also something to their style that suggested the pride of the anchorite's self-mortification. They created, in fact, their own wilderness in the midst of modern cities, and retired to it with the same disgust for the fallen world, the same fear of its taint, and the same ideal of regeneration that the Sandinista guerrilla leader and poet Omar Cabezas describes in his memoir, "Fire from the Mountain":

> As if the mountain and the mud, the mud and also the rain and the loneliness, as if all these things were cleansing us of a bunch of bourgeois defects, a whole series of vices; we learned to be humble, because you alone are not worth shit up there. . . . And little by little all our faults faded out. . . . The new man began to be born with fungus infections and with his feet oozing worms; the new man began to be born with loneliness and eaten alive by mosquitoes; he began to be born stinking.

The guerrilla poet is also suggesting what his own followers and those of Cox had in common with the son of the Calvinist insurance man from Nashville—a deeply frustrated, and therefore theoretical, and, in its purity, potentially obsessional ideal of self-definition.

Cox made his first trip to Nicaragua in 1984, to observe the elections in León, where he met two teen-agers who had been invalided out of the Army—a sixteen-year-old, who was blind, and a seventeen-year-old, with shrapnel wounds in his stomach. They urged him to make a movie about their country, but he told them he would never find the money for it in Hollywood. They challenged him. "Why not? You're smart, you live in the U.S., you can do what you like."

"They politely didn't add 'You're white,' " Cox said.

Cox later saw a glancing reference to Walker in a magazine article, visited Granada, and, later, got Carr's and Scroggs' biographies. "I was surprised at how easily they both accepted Walker's virginality," Cox remarked. "They bought the legend of an idealistic, loony Puritan hero who had a few problems with his masculinity."

His own view of Walker was considerably more demonic, a fact that distressed Ed Pressman, the film's executive producer, who, succumbing to pressure from his backers, was forced to reduce the budget from the six and a half million dollars Cox had hoped for to five. He was also worried that the director was presenting Walker as a "monster" when the scenario, in his opinion, could more properly have evolved into "a comedic 'Viva Zapata!' " Pressman said, "For me, the politics are a worthwhile part of the story, but for Alex they've become the story. I think he thinks he's Walker. And he *is* Walker."

While Pressman thought Alex was Walker, Daniel Ortega, the President of Nicaragua, had compared Walker to Reagan. Sergio Ramírez, the Vice-President of Nicaragua, compared Walker to Hitler. Oliver North was in contention for the analogy. And Tomás Borge, Nicaragua's Minister of the Interior, used the same adjectives to describe Walker that people often use to describe Borge: "severe, mystical, and fanatical." But that is why, perhaps, the Minister also had a certain sympathy for the filibuster. He told the French journalist Bernard Zekri, "In his monstrousness, he had good faith—he would never have been capable of doing business with Iran, or of accusing us of drug dealing. There's a vast difference between the pure madness of Walker and the incredible debauchery of Reagan."

What all the analogies had in common, however, was a notion that the Nicaraguans were calling "*el complejo Walker*"—"the Walker complex": the compulsion to mount a war horse or a pulpit and to play Nicaragua's champion. Nearly every member of the cast exhibited at least some mild symptoms of the complex.

Ed Harris had turned down a starring role in another movie to play Walker, at a fraction of his usual high-six-figure salary. Cox, Pressman, and Lorenzo O'Brien—one of the

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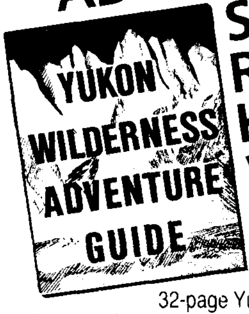

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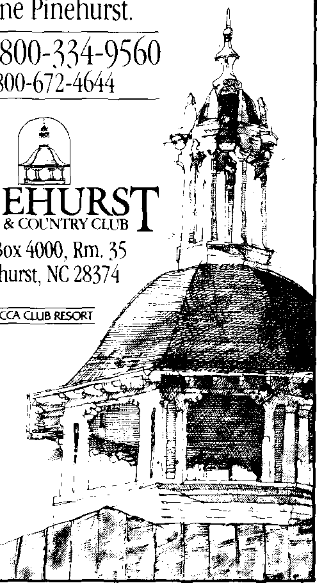

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film's producers—each assigned one of his percentage points of the film's profits to the Nicaraguan film ministry. Other actors had given up a lucrative commercial, a play, a soap opera. Spider Stacey had missed part of the Pogues' concert tour. Not everyone working on "Walker" was an idealist ready to ditch Malibu for San Juan del Sur, and Sy Richardson, a black actor from Chicago, admitted to me, as we were walking home from a liberation-theology Mass one Sunday, that Nicaragua "depressed" him—its dusty shantytowns reminded him too much of those his relatives had lived in, in South Carolina. But Richardson was an exception, and the "Walker" equipment trailers and T-shirts advertised the solidarity of the film company with the Sandinistas in the form of a motto borrowed from their revolution: *"Aquí no se rinde nadie."* Translated literally, the slogan means "Nobody here surrenders." Translated more poetically, it has the sense "Nobody here cries uncle." The verb *"rendirse"* is reflexive: "Nobody here gives himself up."

That slogan is the cry of a besieged city whose provisions have run out; a city caught in a stranglehold and at the mercy of a power to which it is superior only in courage and virtue. What I heard and saw, however, and what I felt, in the carnival atmosphere on the "Walker" set, was the battle cry of a different uprising, of another youthful band living a revolutionary idyll. It was the slogan of the 1968 Paris Student Commune: *"Imagination au pouvoir!"*

The gringos working on "Walker" had the luxury of calling their brief and voluntary experience of sacrifice, solidarity, and fun "a political act," and they were avowedly less concerned with the ultimate content of the film than the Nicaraguans in the company were. For them, the "political act" was publicizing the history of United States intervention in their country, and they had enormous hopes for the impact of "Walker"—hopes that it would change millions of ordinary Americans' perceptions of Nicaragua.

The naïveté of this hope recalled an observation that the senior Western diplomat had made concerning the appointment of Walker II as an ambassador. "It's an example of how ahistorical our country is," he said. "We live in the future. And that, ironically, is part of our success. It's what creates the perception in foreigners that 'anything is possible' in America. Why do you think they all want green cards?"

Perhaps nothing represents and perpetuates the fantasy that "anything is possible in America" more dramatically than a Hollywood movie being shot on location in the Third World. Even if "Walker" was not, strictly speaking, a Hollywood movie, it was a Hollywood experience for the Nicaraguans, and, in spite of themselves, they were seduced by it. "The Nicas should hate our guts," the diplomat said, speaking of the greater seduction of Nicaragua by the United States. "They should hate our guts the way the Panamanians hate our guts. But they continue to identify with us. And that's part of the tragedy of Nicaragua."

MODERN Nicaragua is a racially mixed and apparently a racially unself-conscious society (with a few ethnically undiluted enclaves: the Miskito Indians of the Atlantic coast and the English-speaking blacks from the same region—which was colonized by the British—who are the descendants of African slaves imported to the Caribbean). But Sandino, for example, was the product of a typical Nicaraguan intermarriage. His father was a landowner of colonial descent and his mother was an Indian woman who picked coffee on the Sandino plantation. She was from the village of Niquinohomo, near Masaya—the site of Nicaragua's most famous volcano and the cradle of its tribal culture.

Last month, Monimbó, one of the neighborhoods of Masaya, was the scene of a violent protest against the draft. But during the revolution the same neighborhood offered one of the most heroic examples of resistance to Somoza; its residents resisted the Guardia's assault house by house and street by street, with enormous casualties, and held out even when Somoza ordered his planes to bomb them. In Susan Meiselas's photographs of the battle, many of the residents wear the white Monimbó masks.

One of the Nicaraguan actors with a major role in "Walker" (the role of a Granadan toady, Don Domingo de Goicouría) was a leader of the F.S.L.N. resistance in Masaya and was a student of the region's culture and folklore. Alan Bolt had an Indian grandmother on his mother's side—the daughter of a Toltec chief—but his name is the legacy of an English grandfather. "The tribal paradigm of the Toltecs was the artist," Bolt says, "while the paradigm of the Aztecs was the warrior." He's tried to keep "something useful from his paternal side—the skepticism," he explains, "though the two strains aren't as alien as you might think. The Indians say that your only security is believing that nothing is secure. *Dubito ergo sum.*"

Bolt has a dancer's poise, heightened, in a curious way, by a limp—the result of an accident. His blue eyes come as a slight jolt in his dark face, and they have, as does his mien, a certain mandarin fragility and lightness. He was born in Matagalpa, on a plantation owned by his family, and in the late nineteen-sixties he studied nuclear physics in West Germany. But he abandoned science for the theatre when he met the first of his two "masters," a Zen priest who taught him Kabuki. He met his second "master"—an Indian *brujo*, or healer—some ten years later in Masaya, where he was running an underground theatre workshop as part of his political work for the Frente. Its plays were improvised in the cellars of safe houses, and its student actors, who were mostly peasants and workers, adopted the traditional masks of Monimbó—partly in defiance, partly as an aesthetic principle, but also to protect their identities from informants.

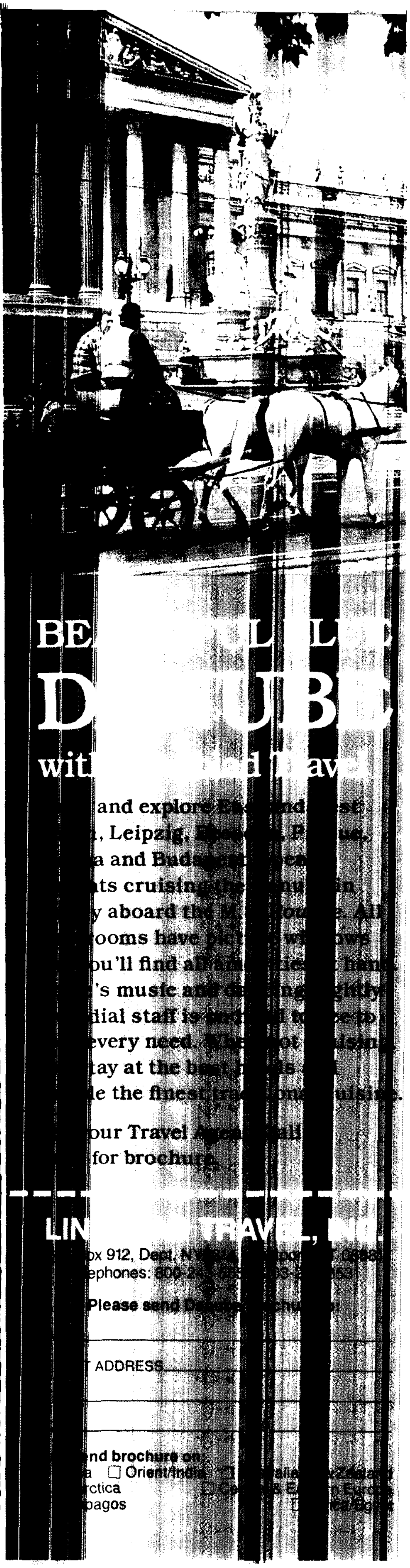
After the revolution, Bolt was named the director of the new National Theatre, but found himself chafing at the notion of an "institutionalized" Nicaraguan culture, administered from the top. The leaders in Managua, he says, "have, for the most part, been educated in privilege, and haven't been conscious enough of the colonialism in their own attitude—which is that they know best. They also don't understand that this is a fragmented country, many countries, who share a history only up to a certain point. The Miskitos don't know they're Nicaraguan, and for me—coming from the mountains of Matagalpa—Managua was like China." His personal definition of revolution is "the daily lives of three million people; we're not a 'one;' and it's a Western ideal of monotheism that breeds"—he smiles—"neurosis."

Bolt's urbane, un-Western dissidence makes a refreshing *digestif* after, say, one of Ortega's four-hour speeches, although his humility as a disciple of folk wisdom has a didactic quality of its own. He has his pilgrims; he's an "experience" for people; and they encourage you to seek out his wisdom the way certain U.C.L.A. students urge you to read Castaneda. His Sandinista detractors, on the other hand, tend to roll their eyes heavenward at the mention of his name, as if you had affronted their rifle butts with a flower.

After he resigned his post at the National Theatre, Bolt returned to Matagalpa, determined to put his Indian master's teachings into practice. The *brujo* taught him, he says, "to seek the stomach of things—to digest, not isolate, how I live from how I make art." He subsequently founded a coöperative on his family's old plantation, La Praga, whose members grow their own food and have addressed Nicaragua's acute housing shortage (a deficit of three to four hundred thousand dwellings) by designing sixty new communities out of soil-cement and bamboo—a plant they cultivate scientifically. One resident of the co-op's *zacate*-thatched dorm, when I stayed there, was a young American architect named Daniel Glenn, whose father was part Crow Indian, and who explained to me that one of La Praga's aims was "to revive the native 'low tech' building tradition in Nicaragua that we [the United States] destroyed with the Walker approach"—creating a dependence on expensive and inappropriate materials and technologies.

La Praga, however, has also become a center for experimental theatre, which attracts established foreign directors and actors as well as young Nicaraguans from rural backgrounds. The two companies in residence during my visit were rehearsing a play that they planned to take on tour to peasant villages, and which they hoped would engage their audiences in the same sort of dialogue that it had stimulated among the actors—men and women playing each other's roles. "It's about rape," Bolt explained, "one of the most serious but least talked about problems in the countryside. We're approaching it as a farce, because we have to avoid moralizing." The chief "rapist" was a stocky twenty-six-year-old woman with a baby face whose name was Chayo Pérez. As a teen-age waitress in Managua, at the end of the Somoza period, Pérez had joined one of Bolt's underground workshops and, discovered, she said, "what truth and freedom there are behind a mask."

Despite his differences with Managua, Bolt calls himself a Sandinista *hasta la muerte*, but the Party, he says, "excommunicated" him when he aired his criticisms in an interview published in *El Nuevo Diario*. He remains un-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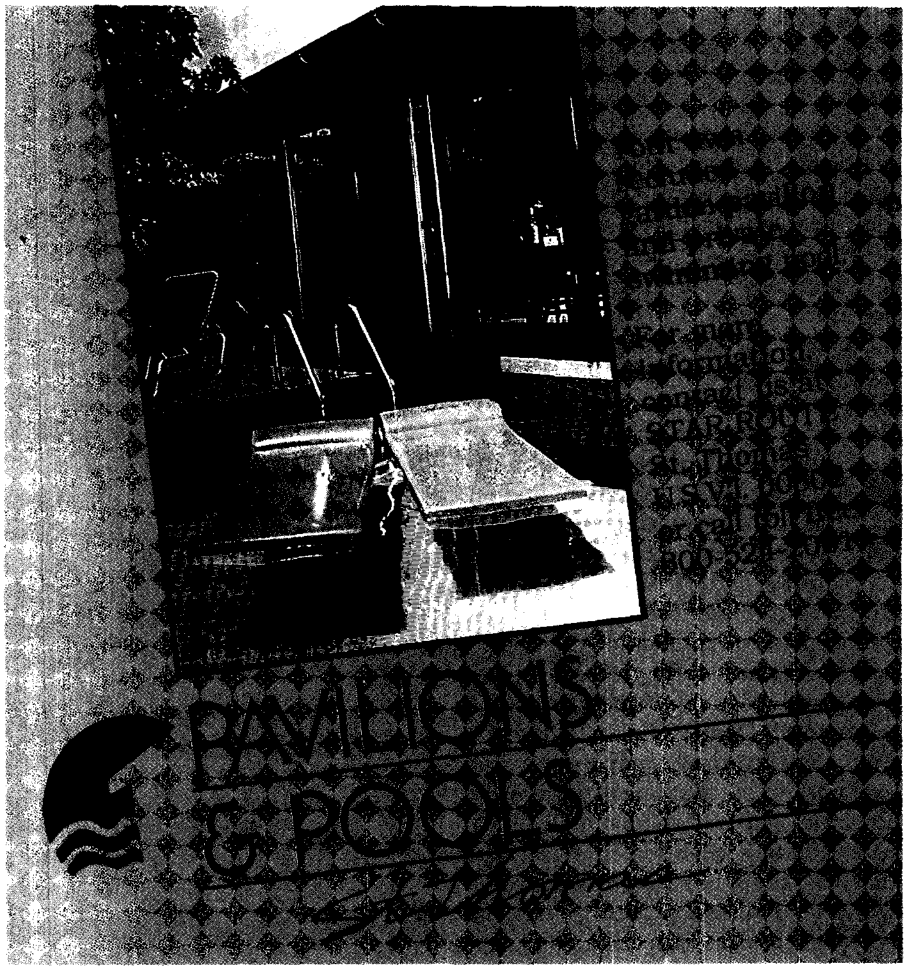
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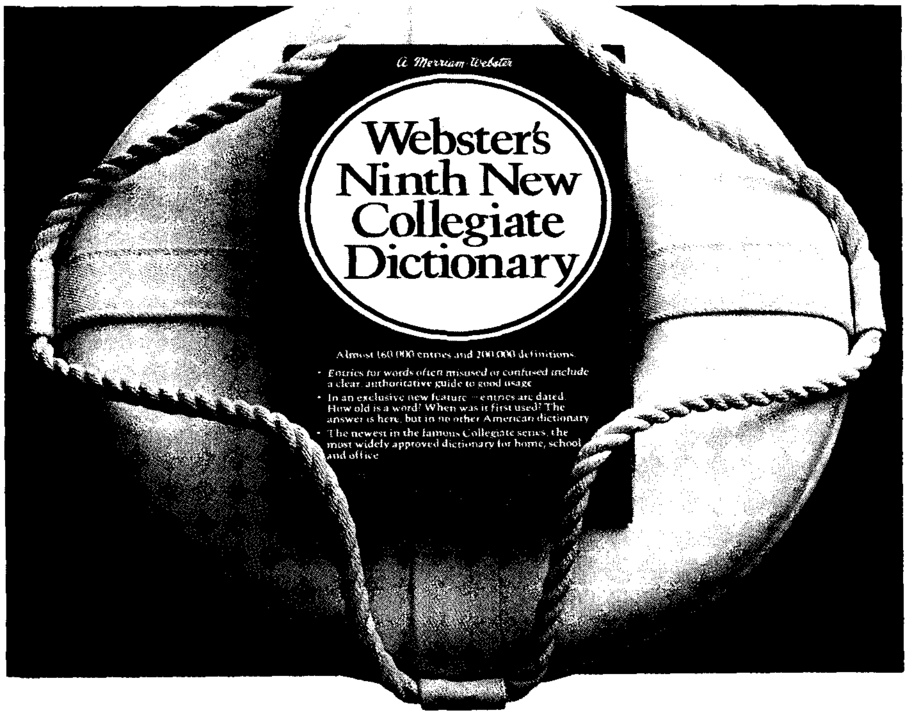
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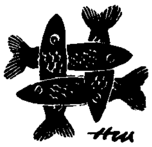
muzzled, however, and free to pursue his own path, and if La Praga does not receive any government subsidies it also doesn't seek them. "That's *why* I took this part in 'Walker,' " he told me. "We need the money. But movies are alien to me, because of their fragmentation."

SITTING on a stone by a river in Bolt's bamboo forest, peeling myself a grapefruit that had just dropped from a tree, I considered his advice that "in eating, breathing, and feeling we must struggle for coherence." But I also wondered what American movie fans, who don't pay their six bucks to struggle for coherence, would make of "Walker." The original story had been chaotic morally, not to say narratively, and the screenplay, by Rudy Wurlitzer, had cleaved fairly close to it, while setting it further askew in an ironic frame. The action had been sketched with deliberately crude and farcical modern strokes. The scenes had been planted with such anachronisms as the Mercedes, copies of *Time*, and Zippo lighters. Raw street talk was played off against witty repartee and polished rhetoric, some of which was taken from Walker's own writings. Wurlitzer had, in fact, given Cox a document that, like the letter Castellón had given Walker, could be used to raise money, and, if necessary, waved in front of the authorities who were keeping him under surveillance —his producers—as evidence that his real enterprise was in no way subversive.

Cox had courage, but he sometimes seemed to me to be vandalizing his own project, much as the Sandinistas, making ill-timed trips to Moscow or Havana before a Contra-aid vote in Congress, have sometimes seemed to be vandalizing their own revolution. And Wurlitzer himself—a man of fifty, with the air of a Weimar anarchist—stood on the fringes of the set in a rumpled Hawaiian outfit and acknowledged the risks that Cox was courting. "In his love of excess and provocation, he's adolescent. But that's also where his talent is. He loves to walk along the precipice." The Mexican film star Pedro Armendáriz, playing the Nicaraguan General Muñoz, supplied a different perspective—the Latin one. "I don't know what the Americans will make of it," he said, "but this sort of chaotic and tragic farce is purely Central American. All Central American stories begin and end like 'One Hundred Years of Solitude,' which was based on the tales that García Márquez's grandmother told him. You call it 'magic realism,' but to us it is just day-to-day, year-to-year reality *al frente del pelotón*—in front of the firing squad."

Cox liked to think of his production as a coöperative effort, not unlike La Praga, which it wasn't quite: its squalor was shared in a communal fashion, but its chain of command was inevitably as vertical as that of most big features. And as the filming progressed the cultural rift between the Latins and the gringos in the production widened. The rudeness with which orders to do the menial work of making a film are given, and the smartness with which they are supposed to be followed, were a source of tension and misunderstanding.

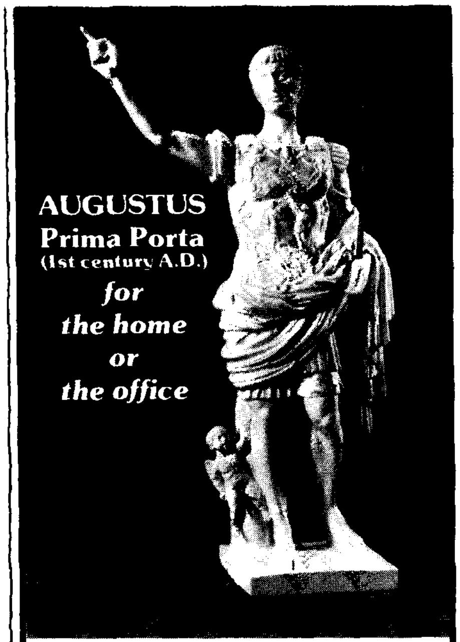


Directors always have a number of underlings who bully people on their behalf, and who spare them the indignity of being resented for their *prepotencia*, and Cox himself was never criticized for, and never displayed, a colonial attitude toward the Nicaraguans, or toward the extras. Their resentment was displaced to those who enforced discipline on the front lines—and in this case the colonial administration happened to consist of three women assistants and the Spanish-speaking, primarily Mexican technical crew. "We expect it from the gringos," one Nicaraguan woman told me—"it" referring to the abuse of power by white men. "But Mexicans and women ought to know better." "Can't take a pushy gal," said one of the extra Immortals—a self-styled "traveller on an ego trip," who hailed from Houston. "Summun' oughta tell them gals that you catch more flies with honey than with vinegar." The Nicaraguan men—particularly the Sandinista soldiers detailed to the set, who had received an extensive political reëducation as part of basic training—expounded more enlightened views on women's liberation. "Machismo is a stumbling block to our development," one of them told me. "We all do dishes now." But in fact it drove them crazy to take orders from the women—the more so, I felt, as these were women who happened to be fair and lithe and built like sparrows, with suntanned limbs girdled by the leather holsters in which they carried their walkie-talkies.

There were mutinous rumblings from the upper class of Granada—and particularly from its clergy—as well as from the underclass on the set. The "Walker" people had uprooted electric pylons from the cathedral square and the surrounding streets, and had covered the paving stones with truckloads of dirt and straw, and the faithful couldn't help tracking this "filth" into their churches. The pastor of La Merced, Padre Francisco García—an austere Spaniard, who dressed in what seemed to be a beautician's suit of green polyester—complained to me that he was obliged "to sweep up five times a day," and would say no more about the film. But, listening to him, a parishioner of his named Wilma, who was a seamstress in the film's wardrobe department and a member of a textile coöperative, had to laugh, she said: "It serves him right." She explained that in Granada the Church had "done nothing for the people under Somoza," had "sided with the rich," and had "put down the Liberation priests when they spoke up for us—and now they're against the Sandinistas."

We were sitting on the steps of La Merced, and a horse-drawn hearse covered with flowers and followed by a long cortège passed us on its way to the cemetery. Wilma crossed herself, and proceeded to report to me in detail a rumor I'd heard before—that the bishop was so angry at having the film "shoved under his nose by the Sandinistas" that he'd left town. "First, it was the mules," she said. There was a corral in front of the episcopal palace. "Then they twisted his arm to get him to let them film *inside* the palace, and he later found out that a man and a woman who weren't married had appeared on his balcony in their pajamas." And, finally, it seemed, the film was distracting the seminarians from their prayers. "It's not the gunfire or the explosions—they're used to that," Wilma said. "It's the women in shorts."

Lorenzo O'Brien, a native of Peru, who had been a classmate of Alex Cox's at U.C.L.A. and was one of four Latin producers of "Walker," said that he had tried to avoid "the Walker complex" in his dealings with the Nicaraguans, but that it hadn't always been possible. I quoted this disclaimer to an elderly Granadan don, recently recovered from a thyroid operation—for which, he noted, he had been obliged to fly to Costa Rica—and who had been urging me to read an uplifting four-hundred-page verse



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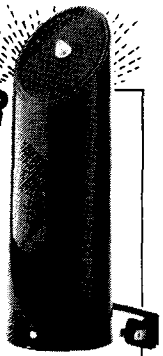

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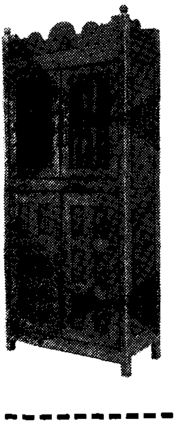

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play about the filibuster, by one of his ancestors.

"El complejo Walker?" he croaked. "I'll tell you what we're saying about it: *"Este Walker nos ha jodido más que el primero!"* ("This Walker has screwed us worse than the first one.") The first one, in his opinion, had been maligned, for "if he had lasted," the old man went on, waving a hand toward the walls of his native city, "this rubble heap might have looked like Houston."

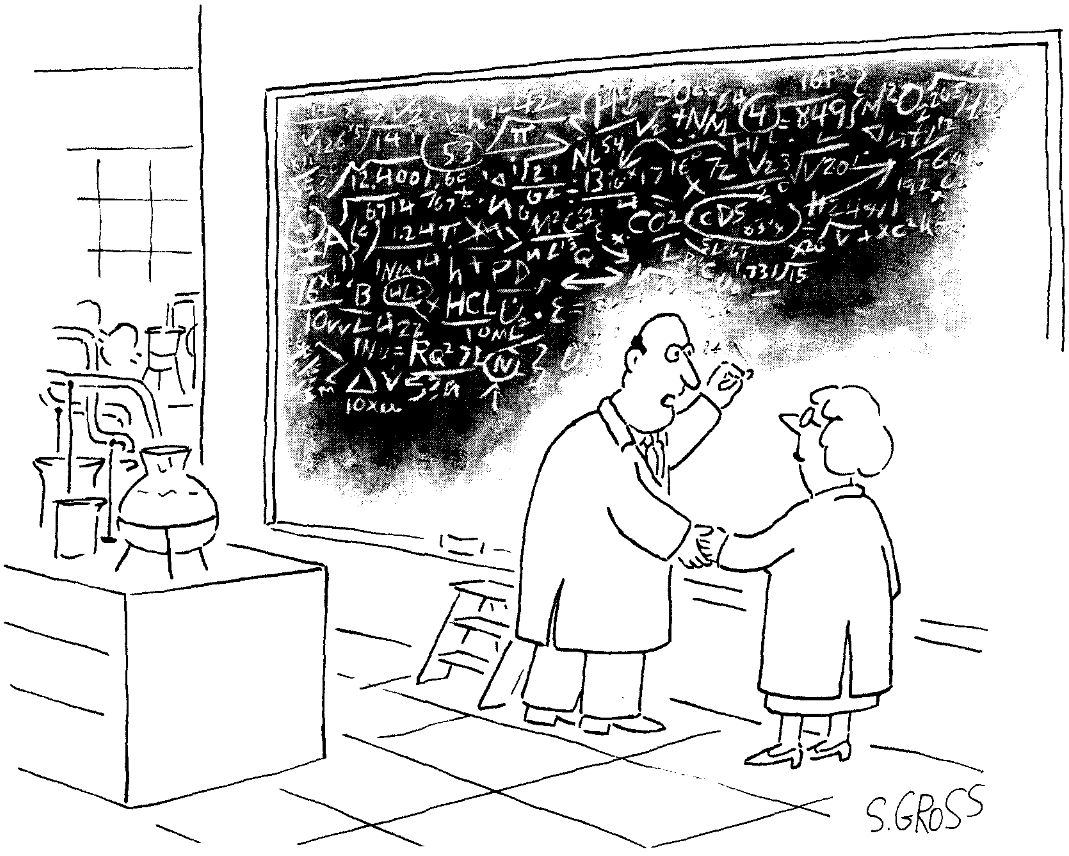
I KEPT losing things in Nicaragua. One particularly irksome loss was of a tape: it disappeared into the sand of a little beach near San Juan del Sur. The tape was a microcassette, the size of a matchbox, and was filled with the voices of strangers at the funeral of Benjamin Linder, the American *cooperante* killed by the Contras. San Juan and Matagalpa, where the funeral had taken place, are equidistant from Managua in opposite directions. San Juan is a port on Nicaragua's southern Pacific coast, where the continent has a fluted edge, forming dozens of little bays and inlets, each with a crescent beach slung between the boulders of the shoreline. Before the overthrow of Somoza, rich families from the capital and from Granada came to spend their holidays in San Juan, in houses that might have been copied from some encyclopedia of American summer places. At the south end of the town are shingled wooden mansions trimmed with gingerbread that recall the Jersey shore. At the north end, where Japanese-style tea pavilions and swimming pools face the ocean, you are somewhere near Malibu. And up on a hill, affording a spectacular, three-hundred-and-sixty-degree view, is a villa of gray clapboard built along the stark geometric lines that were popular on Martha's Vineyard and in the Hamptons in the nineteen-seventies. It is still occupied.

Its owner is Doña Violeta Barrios de Chamorro, the publisher of *La Prensa* and the widow of Pedro Joaquín Chamorro, who was one of Somoza's most courageous opponents and, in 1978, was assassinated by his order. Doña Violeta was a member of the interim coalition government formed to administer Nicaragua after the revolution, but she resigned when she could no longer tolerate the "Marxist-Leninist direction" that the country was taking. Her newspaper, the major opposition voice in Nicaragua, was closed down by the government in 1986, and the Sandinistas have vehemently maintained that it was receiving money and directives from the C.I.A. Doña Violeta has just as vehemently denied and mocked those charges. She is the mother of four. Her younger daughter, Cristiana, works with her at the paper. Of her sons, the older, Pedro Joaquín, Jr., is a leading Contra; the younger, Carlos Fernando, is the editor of the Sandinista Party newspaper *Barricada*. (His uncle Xavier Chamorro is the editor of the pro-government *El Nuevo Diario*, founded by former *La Prensa* staff members who, after the revolution, felt that the newspaper had become too conservative.) And her elder daughter, Claudia, is the Nicaraguan Ambassador to Costa Rica. The political divisions in the Chamorro family are not unusual; in fact, such divisions occur on every level of Nicaraguan society.

Doña Violeta avoided the beach until the heat of the day had abated. Then, late on the afternoon of Good Friday, I saw her strolling slowly along the water's edge, wearing a caftan, dark glasses, and a long strand of pearls. She was attended by her son Carlos, and I was told that nearly the whole family had gathered at her villa for the Easter weekend. My informant was one of her house guests, and he explained that they all endured the long, tense, formal meals by making small talk and trading gossip.

Semana Santa—Holy Week—is Nicaragua's major summer holiday, when sagging bungalows along the waterfront are occupied by professional people and civil servants. They do their own cooking, and their children circulate from house to house like fish swimming around a coral reef. They seem happy to put up an extra hammock for a visitor, or to caucus the spare-cot situation with the neighbors. This weekend, though, there were so many high government officials among the neighbors that one of my hosts wondered who was "minding the store."

"Daniel is minding it," came a voice from deep in a hammock. "He's riding around the empty streets in his jeep. I should have stayed in Managua, too." The voice belonged to a gloomy, rather out-of-shape young man with a dark beard, who could easily have been taken for an upper West Side psychotherapist. He hadn't yet been out in the sun, and he was pinioned to the ropes of the hammock by his five-year-old daughter. He told



"*My wife doesn't understand me.*"

• •

me that his job was baby-sitting, but someone else explained that he was also Nicaragua's Minister of Planning.

San Juan is surrounded by coffee and sugar plantations and cattle ranches, and it is a busy fishing port. I noticed several Cuban freighters at the mouth of the harbor, and was assured that they weren't oil tankers or battleships ("*Qué optimista!*") but held cargoes of Freon and toilet paper. Peasants and fishermen park their infants in wooden wheelbarrows under palm trees lining the shore drive, and cowboys tether their ponies outside seedy bars next to the lagoon, where small boys fish with homemade eagle-feather flies. At night, the beach belongs to the teen-age couples, and to amateur bands that play outside shacks selling rum and turtle eggs. As the tide recedes, it leaves a scum of plankton that gives off an eerie glow.

This is as much resort life as you can find in Nicaragua, and it gives you a rosy picture of social harmony, of a revolutionary society in the act of having an ordinary good time—with the middle classes making do with simple pleasures, the working classes dominating the landscape, at least in numbers and volume, and the upper classes making brief, disdainful ghostly appearances, like the anachronisms in the "Walker" script.

San Juan wasn't a Potemkin village, but it was a moment willed into being and held in suspension by the concentrated desire of those who were participating in it. The war could shatter it at any moment, and on Monday everyone would return to face, in his or her own capacity, the reality that one vacationing bureaucrat had made a joke about. "I just got the latest Common Market report on us," he said. "We've got another four months."

What we call an "idyll," I think, is a taste of wholeness—an image of the integrity of nature or beauty, or of human goodness. A true idyll is invariably short-lived, in part because the kind of solidarity of purpose and desire that it calls for is that of a jury, not a mob, and it is the more difficult to sustain the greater the number of individuals involved in it. The stand that the Danes took against the Nazi deportation of the Jews—three days of almost unprecedented moral unity—was such an idyll. And the overthrow of Somoza was another.

I was given the best description of the revolution's idyllic nature by a taxi-driver in Managua, a member of the Pedro Joaquín Chamorro Taxi Coöperative, which had its headquarters in a thatched lean-to a few blocks from the Hotel Intercontinental. He was a worn man, extremely thin, who looked fifty but may have been about twenty-seven. His mother and several brothers had been murdered by the Guardia, but, oddly, there was no vengeance in him. He was deeply religious, supported the Church leaders who had called for an end to the draft, and believed that the Sandinistas were not sincere enough in their efforts to make peace with the Contras.

Because his taxi didn't have a windshield, he offered me a bargain flat rate for the trip to Granada, which normally took about forty-five minutes. We covered it in a more leisurely manner. As you left the capital, driving south on the Masaya highway, you travelled through a corridor of billboards that called for world peace, road safety, and the remembrance of martyred heroes. Another sign advertised a popular disco called the Xanadú. The only McDonald's in Nicaragua appeared on the right just after you passed a supermarket that was built in the sixties and now had nothing much on its shelves but ketchup and laundry soap. A shantytown loomed up on your left, in the shadow of a drive-in movie. Then the road narrowed, and traffic was obstructed by bullock carts and limping pickups with treadless tires, by checkpoints for contraband, and by hordes of reckless hitchhikers, who flung themselves in the path of any vehicle that might possibly give them a lift.

"The Sandinistas started it, and they organized and led it," the driver said of the revolution. "But we all rose up behind them, the whole country together. The revolution was the best moment any of us will ever live through. You can't imagine what it felt like. I think you'd have to have lived through it yourself, or something like it. It gave us a sense of might, of *potencia*, of holding together, like nothing you can dream of. We thought that changing our society would be quick and easy afterward. But that was

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another matter. If I felt this way about the revolution, imagine what the *comandantes* felt who came down from the mountains or out of the jails. But they can't let it go. And we're divided from the Sandinistas now. We're not against them. We're not for the Guardia." He was referring to the Contras. "We realize they need more time. But they are still cleaving to that moment of being one, and we have gone back to thinking about ourselves as individuals, and wanting things for ourselves and for our children."

IT wasn't during Semana Santa but later, nearly May Day—the banners had been strung—that I lost my cassette, on the beach north of San Juan. Cox had moved the company down from Granada for a few days to shoot Walker's disembarkation, at what had really been Realejo; his trek through the jungle to the site of his first battle with the Conservatives, at Rivas; and the arrival of reinforcements—a ragtag army under the command of a Prussian, who, for the purposes of the film, rode a white bull.

Some of the actors were staying at a modern hotel up in the hills, which charges for its air-conditioned rooms in dollars, and some were staying at the Estrella, a ramshackle wooden hostel that had great charm. And, because there weren't enough hotel rooms to go around, a platoon of volunteers, led by Comandante Cox, slept on the beach.

The bay that Cox had chosen as a location had previously been accessible only by boat. A baffle of hills, loopy as a roller coaster, and densely wooded with thorn trees and cacti, separated the coast and the dirt highway, a few miles to the east. Even after the film company had bulldozed a track to the beach, only vehicles with four-wheel drive could make the grade, and then only in their lowest gear.

Carlos Álvarez, the line producer, drove me back to the beach in his Russian jeep, which was fun to ride in. Álvarez was a Chilean refugee. He had been a well-known theatre director in Chile, and on arriving in Nicaragua, after the fall of Somoza, he had gone to work helping to develop the film industry and acting as a liaison on foreign documentaries and features. He had a marvellously persuasive manner, and I had seen him negotiate with Granadans for a loan of some of their antiques as skillfully as a wine steward working the cork out of an old bottle. He was worldly about human nature but not cynical, and as we drove toward the beach he told me, in a soothing voice, that the film had been responsible for the death of a child.

The accident had taken place on a part of the new beach road which the heavier equipment could traverse. At a bend in the road, there was a sudden incline, and the driver of one of the trailers didn't have time to brake for a twelve-year-old boy on a pony. The pony had bolted, throwing its rider under the trailer's wheels. Álvarez had got there, at four in the afternoon, and had walked down the road to examine the body. "But for a fraction of a second my mind rebelled at the violence of the death, and I perceived it not as a body but as a doll—one of the dummies from the film," he said. "There was no blood, but the wheels of the truck had flattened the boy's head completely. And I had walked by him, and was two metres down the road before I turned. *Pendejo!* It's a child who's dead, I thought."

The police came, and the forensic experts and photographers, because, Álvarez noted, "since the revolution a death is something that counts." It wasn't until ten at night, though, that the boy's family arrived. The pony was still standing next to the body, and the boy's father was so angry and aggrieved, and so confused about the sequence of events, that he tried to shoot it. It fell to Álvarez to arrange the funeral, and to rent a place for the wake—for the family lived in the hills, on a very small plot of land, and their house was "too poor" to accommodate all the mourners. He rented chairs, too, he said, and bought food, rum and coffee, and a Mass. "It's ridiculous, the death of a child. How was he to anticipate a bunch of madmen and a trailer? We had invaded his territory. He'd been riding his pony along that road for years."

We didn't find my tape, but we took a swim, and pretended that no one had ever set foot on the beach before us. Then I sat down and tried to reconstruct the Linder funeral in a thorough manner, but Álvarez's story had somehow short-circuited it for me, or fused it with the boy's funeral. All I remembered, finally, was a swirl of color as an immense cortège in honor of a death that counted snaked its way up and down the hills of Matagalpa, past ironmongers' shops and bars, a dry riverbed, and a cinema where "Goodbye, Columbus" was playing. President Ortega and his wife were supporting Linder's family, and there were phalanxes of mourners from many walks of Nicaraguan life: clowns from the circus school, dressed in turquoise and yellow; Mothers of Heroes and Martyrs of the Revolution, each of whom carried a pink flower. But at the center of the crowd, for me, and alone in it—even though he wasn't alone—was Linder's father. He was taller than the other men. He had a shock of white hair, and was wearing a white business shirt. His skin was very white, too, and his grief and confusion flickered like his pallor.

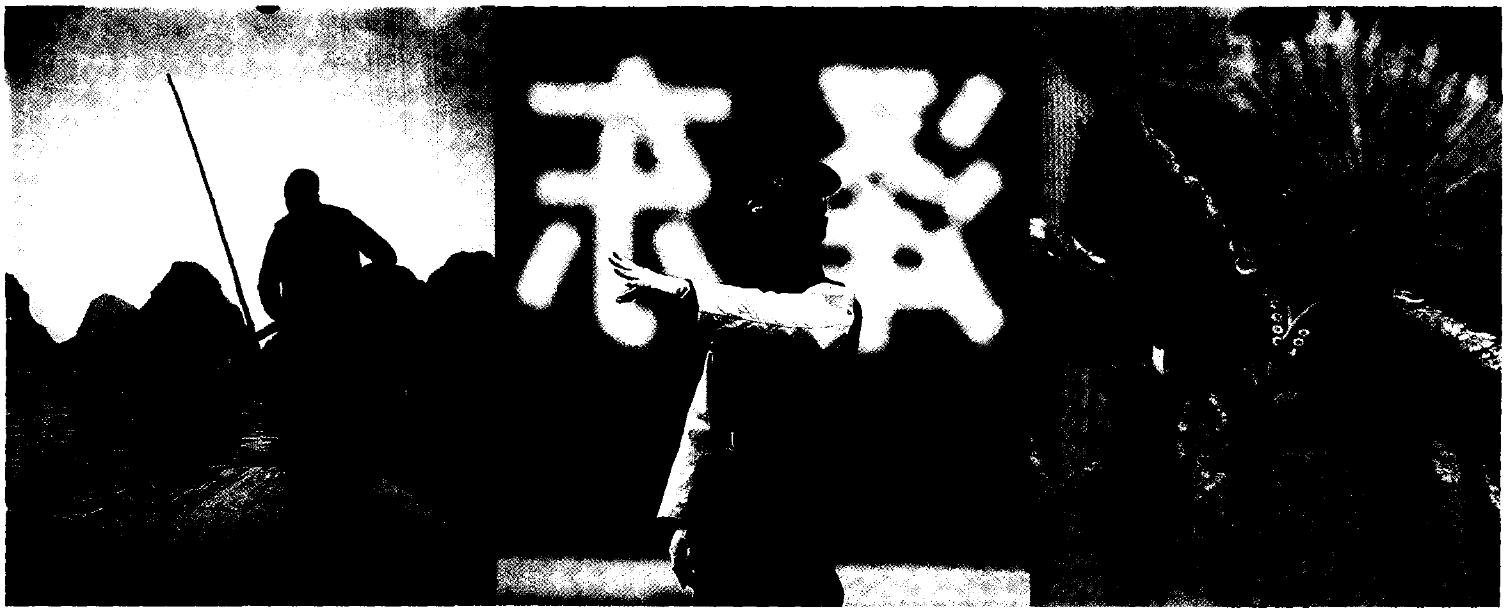
"WALKER" had received a great deal of publicity in the Sandinista press, all of it favorable, for the government had taken up the slack in Cox's shrunken budget, and was providing the film company with low-cost construction materials, labor, transportation, and advice. But the allocation of these resources to a foreign company for something as ephemeral as a movie aroused a certain amount of resentment from a populace that was living on war rations and was being constantly exhorted to greater frugality and sacrifice.

During my visit, the principal forum in Nicaragua for such resentments was a live radio broadcast called Contacto 620. Any citizen with access to a working telephone (a significant limitation) could call in to the program with his or her tale of waste, negligence, or corruption. One call came from a teacher in an elementary school. She berated "Compañero Lacayo" (the director of INCINE, the Nicaraguan Film Ministry) or "Compañero Daniel" (Ortega) or "Compañero Sergio" (Ramírez), or whichever *compañero* was responsible for keeping the plywood mills of Nicaragua working overtime to provide backdrops for "Walker"—particularly since those backdrops were scheduled to go up in flames when Granada was burned down by the filibusters. "Roof my schoolhouse first!" she said.

It was to Compañero Sergio Ramírez, Nicaragua's forty-five-year-old Vice-President, that the producers of "Walker" first addressed their script. When I talked to Ramírez in Managua, he said that he read it "out of pure artistic curiosity and interest," and corrected a few minor details, but "nothing political." He also told me that he'd liked Alex Cox's other films and was himself partial to "*la novedad*"—to creative gutsiness. "As an artist," he concluded, "you have to keep waging a revolution."

Ramírez has an almost immobile yet expressive face, which made me think of a gas burner with a great range of middle and low settings but no high. The adjustment of his features which reflects differences between thoughtfulness, solemnity, outrage, pleasure, deadpan receptiveness, boredom, and coolness is subtle but makes itself felt—at least, to someone near him. When I challenged him with the schoolteacher's complaint, his eyelids flickered, and he replied, "We must resist a tendency here to reduce things to black-and-white." There was another flicker. "A load of plywood won't solve Nicaragua's problems." A faint smile. "They're paying for it, you know."

On a rostrum, Ramírez towers above the eight other members of the Sandinista junta, and there is something simplified and monumental about his figure. If he were a statue, you wouldn't question the message that his creator had intended to ex-



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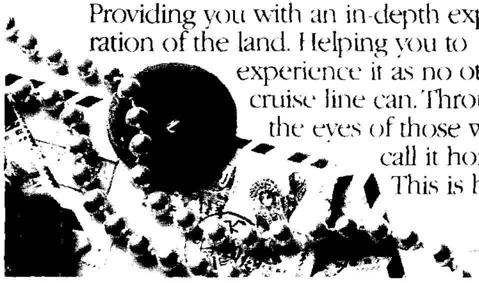

press through him: immovability. He has a playful intellect, however, and he is one of his country's most distinguished men of letters. He told me that after his election to office, in 1984, he had thought he could set literature aside for the duration of his term ("six years, at least") but he had been mistaken. "I'm a professional writer," he said. "If you don't exercise your profession, it atrophies. So I have to write." He writes from five to seven every morning, and has so far accumulated six hundred pages of a novel.

The Vice-President is considered a moderate among the *comandantes*. (The senior Western diplomat, however, suggests replacing the distinction between "moderates" and "hard-liners" with "ideologically immature" versus "mature" Marxist-Leninists; the latter faction, he says, consists principally of Tomás Borge and the Minister of Foreign Coöperation, Henry Ruiz—men for whom, however, he has a certain respect: "They're the best chess players in Managua.") Like many Latin-American intellectuals, Ramírez is a product of two worlds—his native one and that of Europe, where he lived and studied in the sixties—and in his mind revolution may be part of a repatriation process. "We have to free ourselves from the sway of the Old World and its conventions in favor of the New World and its energy," he says. "And then we have to take the next step, which is more difficult. We have to stop seeing the United States as the producer of history and culture." Ramírez vehemently insists that it's not from a prefabricated Russian or Cuban model that the revolution in Nicaragua takes its direction—that the government is searching for indigenous solutions to its problems. "Pluralism has to be strengthened here in the future," he says. "We undertook, as young people, to make a revolution, and to change the values of our society . . . the war has forced us to impose restraints, but in peacetime we will have to accept an open political debate and a multiplicity of expressions."

I appealed to Ramírez in another of his capacities, that of a student of history, to explain his confidence that the Sandinistas would voluntarily relinquish their control of Nicaragua's political and cultural life. Could he point out any dictatorial regime that had ever made such a transition peacefully?

He replied, "Those revolutions that come to power by force and have to impose themselves ideologically lose their flexibility in the process, and lose their imagination. That is not our case, and imagination is precisely our greatest advantage. We have solved many of our problems with imagination when we lacked any other resources. I'm not afraid that we'll lose this flexibility. Our tolerance is too ingrained."

Didn't this mean simply "Trust us?"

"Trust our laws," he countered. "I personally believe that the other parties don't have solutions for Nicaragua's problems. But that's just my opinion—and that's as it should be. We don't dictate subjects to our artists. We don't have such a thing as Nicaraguan Realism. We have the only constitution in the world with an article that guarantees absolute artistic freedom—and I wrote it."

My own impression when I talked to Ramírez was that his integrity was as genuine as his commitment to pluralism was sincere. My subjective judgment, though, had no more real value than his confidence in the "flexibility" of his revolution. As he himself observed of the first William Walker, "he was a man who played

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the piano, took care of his sick mother, and had a deaf-mute girlfriend. But you have to ask yourself what the consequences of his acts were, not what kind of human being he was." The article that Ramírez was so proud of writing was, under the state of emergency, suspended, along with eleven others, guaranteeing Nicaraguans somewhat less esoteric civil liberties. Since I spoke with Ramírez, the Sandinistas have lifted the state of emergency and reopened *La Prensa* and the Catholic radio station. They have, however, censored the station's news broadcasts, and suppressed other forms of protest and dissent. Yet their sense of embattlement can hardly be attributed to "paranoia" and "ridiculousness," as Walker II had put it. The internationally monitored election that brought them to power in 1984 was the only one in their country's modern history not manipulated by the United States, and they are now the legal government of a bankrupt country with a population of three million, at war with an American Administration that has subverted its own laws and hired the palace guard of their deposed dictator to overthrow them in the name of democracy.

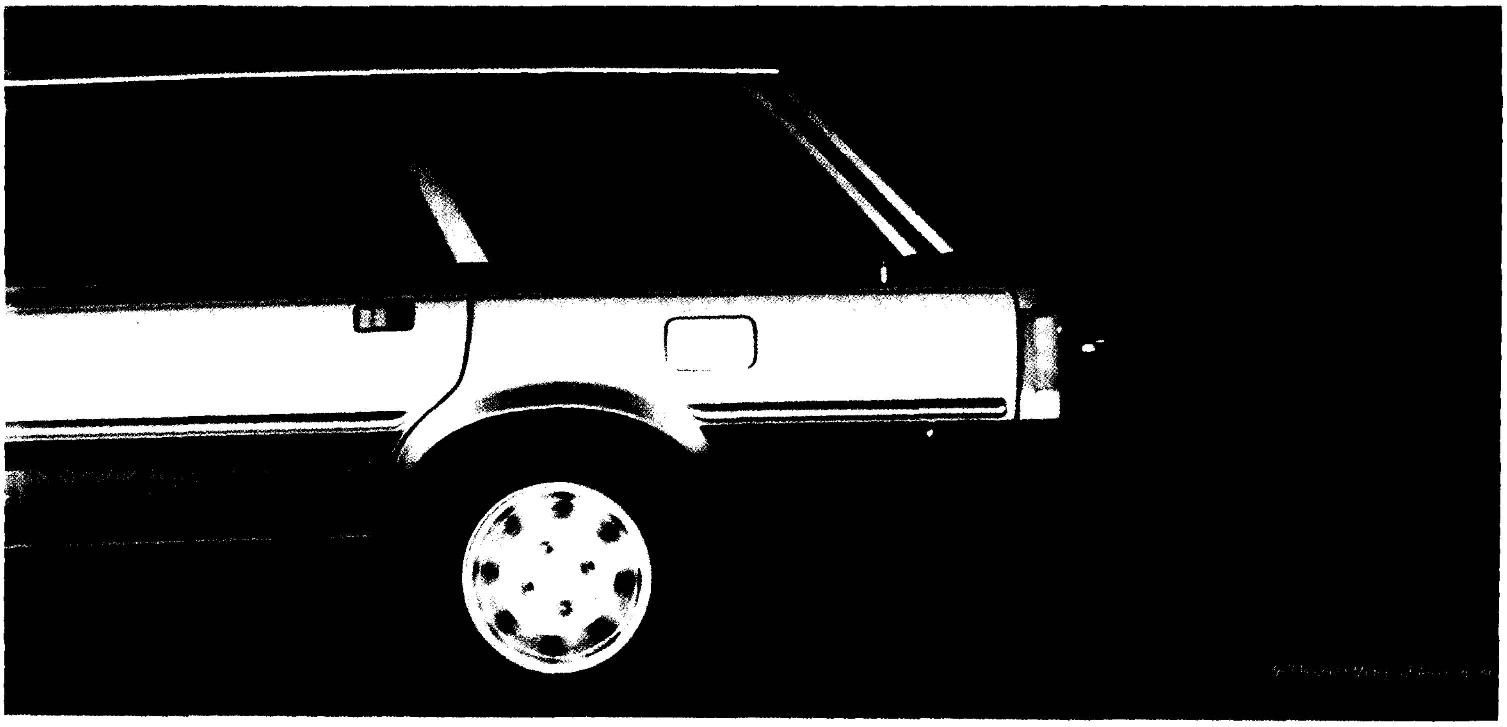
Unlike his former comrade Alan Bolt, Ramírez does not believe that one must integrate art and politics, and he seemed grateful when I turned our conversation to the subject of his six-hundred-page novel, which—he smiled—"is not the great novel of the revolution that everyone here keeps waiting for." He told me that he'd tried to write an epic about the Somoza period, "opening in 1959, when the Resistance began," and analyzing the way the dictatorship had shaped the characters and fates of a group of friends, but it had kept turning into a "pastiche" on him. "So as an exercise I started to write a 'thriller,' set in León in the nineteen-thirties—a story of jealous love and murder by poison. I took my title from an old American movie, which starred Charles Laughton and Maureen O'Sullivan. In Spanish, it was called 'Castigo Divino'—'Divine Punishment.' But if there's a translation I'd like to keep the original title."

"What's that?" I asked.

" 'Payment Deferred.' "

THE next time I saw Ramírez, it was at a distance, which permitted me to think about the paradox he represents: "*Imagination au pouvoir*" and "*Aquí no se rinde nadie*" in the same being. But whether they are in harmony or in conflict is impossible to determine. The former slogan is an ideal of freedom—stirring, if somewhat sloppy. The latter is a commitment to self-defense, and as an offensive position it becomes a statement of intransigence. The creation of a just balance between freedom and security in Nicaragua will probably depend on the compromise that Ramírez and his colleagues are able to reach between those two extremes—reach first as individuals, next among themselves, then with their opponents, and, ultimately, in their relations with the United States, where the imbalance originates.

Ramírez was now up on a rostrum, and was flanked by the gargoylean Borge; the with-it Ortega, in his windbreaker and aviator glasses; and the suave Henry Ruiz. Also in attendance was Ortega's wife, Rosario Murillo, who is the head of the Cultural Workers' Union. They had convened to award Graham Greene the country's most distinguished cultural decoration, the medal of the Order of Rubén Darío. Greene, as tall as Ramírez though



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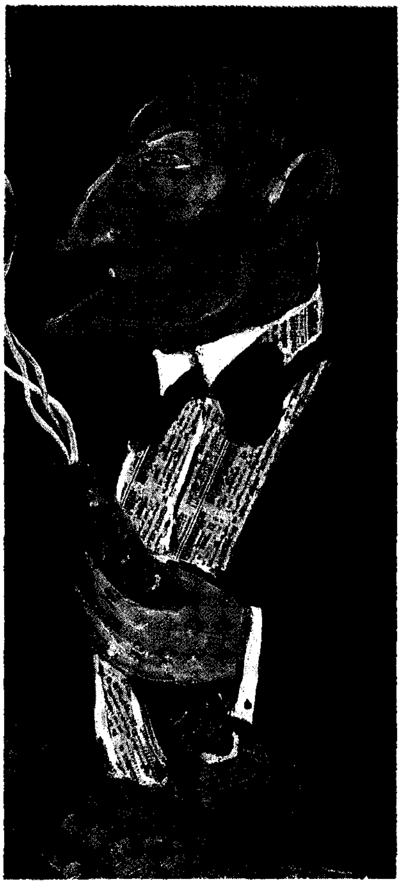

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slightly stooped, was listening, through an interpreter, to the homage being paid to him. He trembled a little as Ortega pinned the ribbon to his *guayabera* and as they embraced. "I have a certain female shame that you are giving this honor to an Englishman," he then told the audience. "England has done very little for you in your difficulties. I don't feel that I deserve this. . . . I see you as the first line of defense in a war between civilization and barbarism." A British Embassy aide in a smart blazer standing beside me could not at this point resist muttering patriotically, "What's shameful, old boy, is that you've been had."

It isn't an overstatement to say that Rubén Darío is something like Nicaragua's Yeats. He was born in Metapa (now Ciudad Darío) in 1867, and though he was prolific in several literary genres, he was greatest as a poet. One can trace the remarkable vigor of contemporary poetry in Nicaragua directly to his influence, but his work also had an impact on modern literature throughout the Latin world. Moreover, among his countrymen his stature is something more than a source of patriotic pride. Darío's contribution to revolutionary nationalism in Nicaragua—it consisted partly of serving as an example of imaginative autonomy—is comparable to Sandino's. In fact, one of the leading contemporary Nicaraguan poets, Pablo Antonio Cuadra, has called his country a bird with two wings, Darío and Sandino, and has admonished the Sandinistas that they can't clip one of the wings and expect to fly.

For a foreign audience, the reverence that Nicaraguans feel for both these figures needs some perspective, and a passage from one of Ramírez's own essays can, I think, supply it:

> Think of it, the irony represented by the fact that a popular revolution that proclaims its national independence in the face of the Colossus of the North—called this with a certain fear and tenderness by some, and with manifest hatred by others—is taking place in a small, weak, poor country without economic resources, without oil, with no industrial development, with an enormous peasant mass and . . . the remnants of a servile bourgeoisie in spurious carnal contact with the Empire: an empire capable of encircling it, at its own convenience and whim, within its strategic frontiers.

Juxtapose the language of this passage with the image of Hasenfus and his captor from the billboard, and they suggest how intimately the Nicaraguans have suffered our intimidation of them. The billboard and the passage are proud *national* self-portraits—in which the United States takes up most of the frame. Their sense of scale has been distorted by the fear of being overpowered, as it often is in the self-portraits of trauma and abuse victims. We not only colonized Nicaragua's economy and government, we colonized Nicaragua's image of itself—like a colossus of a parent who intrudes on and dominates the imaginative process by which children become who they are. The child generally has no appeal against the substitution of a counter-self for his true one, and he will inevitably assimilate the parents' oversized figure as a hated part of his own being, which may make him a rebel, or else as a too precious and feared part, which may make him a *servile*. The obsessional symptoms that result are familiar to all of us. They are precisely those which Ramírez specifies: "fear and tenderness" in some, "manifest hatred" in others.

"CUÁNDO *queman?*"—"When's the burning?"

I had been asked this question by the women selling live chickadees in Granada's central market, by the clerk in a stationery shop that didn't have any stationery, by an old man in a Baltimore Orioles T-shirt who vulcanized my flat tire, and by Don Francisco Chamorro, who had rented his soap factory to the film company as a set for the scene of a nineteenth-century sweatshop accident. He had also cordially suggested that I come to his house for cocktails an hour or so before the burning and meet a few of his friends, and that we then proceed as a party to the conflagration.

Don Francisco and his friends were gracious, well-dressed people in late middle age, bewildered at "how the whole world had changed," in somewhat the same manner that their American counterparts were bewildered twenty years ago when their children came home from college transformed into peaceniks and drug-crazed hippies. My host was candid but impersonal in his expression of disappointment with the Sandinistas, citing figures on the national debt, the rate of interest paid on it, the percentage decrease in exports and balance of payments, and the dramatic disappearance from Nicaragua of what had once been an abundance of rice, beans, meat, corn, and coffee. "The so-called private sector," he concluded, "is private only in name when the price of raw materials and wages, and the selling prices, are all fixed by the government."

One of Don Francisco's guests was much more outspoken. "The servants came to my father's house as if it were their own, and were cared for there, and lived and died there," he said. "And now—now the relationship between the classes has cooled off, and a lack of confidence and trust has taken the place of the old affection. But don't think for a minute, Señorita, that this is socialism, which is just a word, a generic term, describing nothing in particular. What we have is Bolshevism. It's Russia in 1917. It's all lies when they say they want a mixed economy and a constitutional government. Somoza was a dictator, and a *ladronzuelo*—a petty thief. You couldn't come and go in complete freedom, but it wasn't this: totalitarianism. I had my farms and factories. I could sell my products. I had my free speech. I could get a letter printed in the newspaper." The church bells had set up their counterpoint, and the man continued, in a louder voice, "A small country like this needs someone to protect it. And Ronald Reagan is a great leader, make no mistake. Look at all that he has done for his people. Anti-Americanism in Latin America is simply the envy that the ignorant have for the educated, that the lower classes have for the upper classes and"—he looked around a little apprehensively to see where his wife was—"that ugly women have for the beauties."

WILLIAM WALKER was evacuated twice from Nicaragua before a British gunboat captured him on his third attempt to conquer the country, and turned him over to the Hondurans. On the first occasion, the captain of a United States warship dispatched to protect "the persons and property of Americans" negotiated his surrender—not to the allies, who had defeated him, but to his own country. Having razed Granada as he retreated from it, and having abandoned almost half of his men to cholera, typhus, and their enemies, he was ferried comfortably to New Orleans by the Navy (sulking in his cabin) and greeted as a hero there, making no apologies for his failures of judgment, his casualties, or his own survival. His second foray into Nicaragua was foiled before it could get under way by the fifty guns of the U.S. frigate Wabash, which arrested Walker at San Juan del Norte

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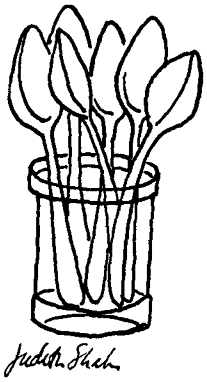
for violating the neutrality laws, and, having given his word to its captain, Commodore Hiram Paulding, that he would sail home on the next mail boat, he did so. Paulding's well-intentioned but legally dubious seizure of Walker on foreign soil raised an outcry in Congress and led to a debate on the morality of filibustering, whose minutes are an eerie presentiment of the Iran-Contra hearings.

Walker's last expedition to Nicaragua was his most desperate, and also his most difficult to finance, for by 1860 the base of his support in the South had been eroded. The popular accounts of his final surrender conflict with the scarce documents on it, but Walker apparently refused the terms of repatriation offered him by the British officer who captured him, insisting that his rightful *patria* was that of which he was President, Nicaragua.



The "Walker" screenplay had compressed the filibuster's several defeats into one, which was to be the final and most dramatic anachronism of the film: the landing of a Marine helicopter in Granada to evacuate Walker and the Immortals. Cox shot the scene on four nights, two of them in Granada itself and two inside the cathedral of Managua, which survived the 1972 earthquake as a roofless shell, with rusted mullions framing a desolate view of the capital. The last shot took a long time to set up. The Sandinistas had sent Cox the only helicopter they had free that night, and it had flown to Managua straight from the front. It still had fresh blood on its floor, and the art department had to scrub down its sides before they could paint out its markings. But what gave the production people a real shock was its size. The helicopter was obviously too big for the confined space that the Nicaraguan pilot had in which to lift off—a square bordered on one side by the cathedral and on another by the Palacio Nacional.

Inside the cathedral, all was gore and ruin. The altar had become an operating table, and there were inert but live horses stabled in a corral in the nave. I climbed up to the mezzanine, and—in the glow of candles, Japanese lanterns, and the moon—the most frightening aspect of the scene was that it didn't look staged.

The armorer obviously had a busy night ahead of him: he was sorting out weapons from several different centuries. The M-16s carried by the film's marines had been the least difficult to procure—the Sandinistas had passed them along as they were captured from Contras—and the period repeating rifles, which had been retooled in London to fire blanks, had been the most difficult: because there were no direct flights to Nicaragua on any Western carrier, they were shipped via Moscow and Havana by Aeroflot.

I used the idle setup time to look for someone in the milling crowd of extras who could point out El Gringo Perdido. The Gringo, I had been told, was a legend among the foreign *cooperantes* in Nicaragua. His name was Stephen Hinkey, and he had come to Nicaragua after the United States invasion of Grenada. First, he had picked coffee south of Managua; then he had taught night school in Jinotega, north of Matagalpa, and he had wound up in Yalí, further north and east, which was one of the most war-torn zones of the country.

"I was one of the few men there," Hinkey told me when I had found him and introduced myself to him on the dinner line. "So I worked with the orphans who had lost their fathers. It was terrible. You're torn apart by it. You can't be the kind of father, friend, and teacher they all desperately need." He had decided that his energy would be better spent in setting up a children's library. "They devoured any books I could scrounge up for them," he said—mostly Russian and Cuban fairy tales. Their lack of political content surprised him—"that and the predominance of blond princesses."

Hinkey has stayed in Nicaragua because he "saw the possibility of making some changes here," he said. "At home, I didn't know where to begin." He wouldn't discuss his background, and apparently he wouldn't discuss it with the people of Yalí, either—hence his sobriquet. He seemed to be in his mid- or late-twenties, and while he had the physique of what is commonly called "a strapping farm boy" he had the features of a Flemish saint. "I shaved my beard, just for the honor of playing a marine," he marvelled.

It had taken more than the usual prodding with bullhorns to herd the large crowd of spectators to the edges of the square, and, with them, all the nonessential extras and hangers-on. I was part of a little group whom the herders had ignored, and I congratulated myself that I still had my sunglasses around my neck when the helicopter started to rev up, for it raised a wave of grit and, as it lifted off, a second wave of paper refuse. The ferocious updraft pressed us against the camera truck.

"It's Belial! The Bull from Hell!" Bob Dickman had shouted before he climbed aboard the helicopter, clutching a clipboard to his breast. Dickman was playing the Company Man, but he was in reality a pacific New Age soul who had lived in a Zen monastery. "You can feel that its intention is to *kill*," he called back. "The spirit of the bayonet is to kill." And as the copter rose it began to rock back and forth—a little at first, then violently—and that did give it the look of a pawing bull.

I assumed that this motion was normal, for nobody knowledgeable seemed alarmed: the veteran war photographers were taking their pictures; the Sandinista soldiers playing corpses were lying motionless on the steps, even as flames pumping through the grillwork above the doors ignited the flying refuse; the armorer was fastidiously wiping his glasses with a chamois; and the Immortals, led by Harris, emerged on cue, although they staggered when the wind hit them.

The blades on the roof and tail of this monstrous helicopter didn't produce the kind of smart, executive whirr that just slightly drowns out the impertinent questions shouted at President Reagan by reporters when his helicopter sets him down on the White House lawn. They produced a rhythmic, deep, syncopated, shuddering beat that felt as if two giant hands were slapping the air, and you with it. This rhythm wasn't only deafening—it was also mesmerizing. For no one budged as we saw the helicopter's tail begin to swing like a rudder out of the water, and its nose edge closer to the flames, which were spewing now from every orifice in the cathedral. The actors hesitated, and then, instead of running clear of the approaching debacle and explosion, they obeyed their characters' nineteenth-century instincts for shelter and dashed up the steps, back into the building.

There had been a last-minute shortage of uniforms, and the extras had been asked to draw straws for them. The losers of this lottery had been so "heartbroken"—particularly one for-

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Although a member of the Boston School, Hale's work represented a bold departure from that of his contemporaries. Hale received his training at the Academie Julien, the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris, the Boston Museum School, and the Art Students League of New York. His first one-man exhibition (1899) was held at the gallery of Durand-Ruel, (great champion of Monet and the Impressionist School in France) in New York.

Works by Hale can be found in numerous public collections including the Pennsylvania Academy, the Corcoran Gallery and the Boston Museum of Fine Arts.

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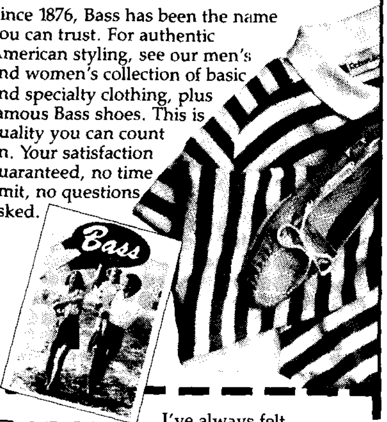
mer Green Beret who had been drilling the civilians—that a stunt man sacrificed his own flak jacket and M-16 to the man. Alex Cox had considered playing one of the marines in the evacuation party, but he decided he wasn't willing to cut his hair. He went up in the helicopter dressed in civvies, and it was from the overcrowded passenger bay—out of voice contact with the pilot—that he had watched his actors and crew risk their lives to save his footage. When the copter landed again, Cox, unlike Walker, seemed genuinely humbled by the danger to which he had exposed his troops. His troops, on the other hand, unlike Walker's—who had straggled home embittered—generally took a philosophic view of their nearly botched evacuation; some even considered that it had been a unique professional challenge to face death with no retakes.

IT was after dawn that same morning—Easter Sunday—by the time I reached Niquinohomo with a carload of friends, all of us a little punch-drunk. The cemetery of the town where Sandino was born marks the turnoff from the main highway, and its walls had been given a fresh coat of turquoise paint for Holy Week. The parents of the hero have separate graves here, for they never married, and as a young boy Sandino lived with his mother and used her name—Calderón. Then, however, his father decided to raise him with his two legitimate children, and, as the historian Thomas Walker writes, "he was nurtured philosophically in the high principles that were supposed to form the basis of Liberal practice." It was also in Niquinohomo, Walker notes, that the teen-age Sandino had an experience that probably marked his political awakening: he saw the body of the Liberals' hero Benjamín Zeledón dragged through the streets and abused by government troops—"a spectacle that had made his blood 'boil with rage.' "

I knew the lay of those streets fairly well, because over the past five weeks I had made several fruitless attempts to gain admission to the Sandino museum and birthplace, and had consoled myself after one of them with a visit to the cockfighting arena outside town, and, after another, with a visit to Sandino's *novia* (betrothed), whose house was a block from the main square.

María Soledad, a spinster in her eighties, was still lucid, and even



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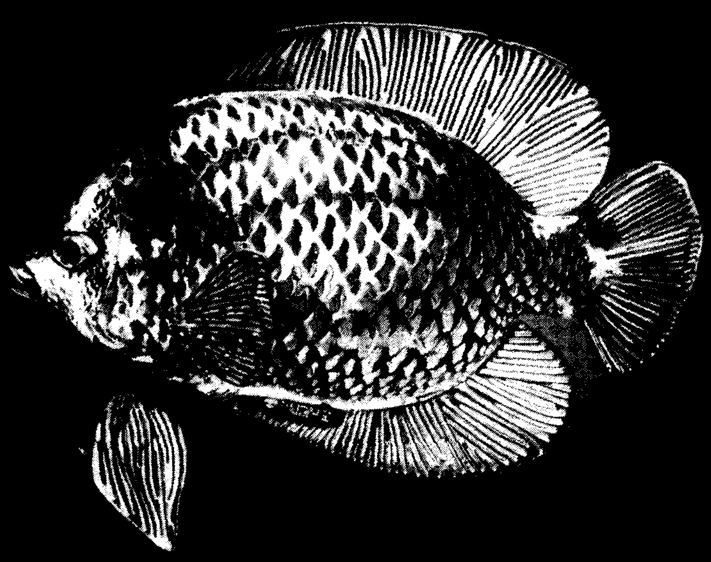
beautiful—an exceptionally tall woman with liquid eyes. Before we could spare her the effort, she had pumped glasses of well water for me and a friend. Then she had her two great-nieces, six and eight, draw up chairs for us, and pressed us to accept lumps of brown sugar that they offered us, shyly, from their apron pockets. Because she was completely toothless, it was difficult for me to follow the story that she embarked on. I understood, though, that she and Sandino had conducted a passionate and clandestine but chaste courtship—her father disapproved—and had endured a long separation while Sandino was off in Mexico proving himself worthy to marry her. Their reunion had been joyful, and a wedding date had been set, but it was never kept, for the future hero, returning to Nicaragua, had killed a local merchant in a duel. Nicaraguan history books ascribe a motive of honor to this duel; Sandino, they say, was defending his mother's name. María Soledad, however, remembers that the duel was fought over a carload of *frijoles*, which Sandino had "paid good money for" but which turned out to be rotten. What was most striking about María Soledad, I thought, was not the tragedy of her unconsummated love for Sandino or her loyalty to his memory but her look of amusement at all the grief that it is possible to survive. You see that look, I think, only in the eyes of very old people privileged to know that they were once completely happy.

There are two paved streets in the village, which run parallel for perhaps half a mile, intersected by gravelled or dirt lanes. Most of the houses are one-story stucco boxes with tile roofs, the exact shape of the houses in a Monopoly game. The terrain is hilly, so the plaza in the center of the village has been raised and levelled, and a flight of steps leads up to a concrete terrace surrounding the church—a concession that the Spanish made to their Indian converts, who were afraid to go inside for Mass.

I wasn't surprised that there was no sign of an Easter Sunday procession that was supposedly to start at eight o'clock. In Nicaragua, such precise information is generally just a polite reassurance that the event, the address, the person, or the place you have inquired after actually does exist; for example, a schedule posted at a railway station simply means that a train to somewhere is in operation on that track. But precisely at eight—to mock



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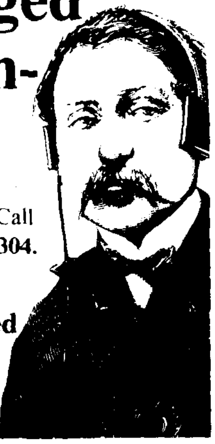

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me, I felt, for expecting the opposite—the procession began.

The sun was high enough by now to give off a glare, so we heard band music—a dirge, a Sousa march—before we saw the villagers advancing. They had assembled at the far end of the upper main street, under a fantastic bower of palm leaves festooned with garlands of real fruit, vegetables, and flowers. And, as they moved slowly toward us, they themselves seemed to be *the bounty spilling from a cornucopia.*

At the head of the procession was a phalanx of plainly dressed men representing the Hebrew elders. Directly behind them, in white robes, was another phalanx of men representing the Apostles, whom the elders "pushed" backward two steps for every one that they struggled forward—a rhythm that did not, somehow, obstruct their progress. The twelve Apostles were sharing the burden of a platform on which they carried the life-size statue of a rather effete Spanish Christ, ruby-lipped though very pale. His curly black wig brushed the shoulders of His purple velvet gown, and He was flanked by three live centurions. The other players in the Passion story had probably been chosen for their virtue and their aplomb, but the centurions had also been chosen for their lightness—they were about four years old. The body of the crowd wasn't at all solemn, but it was keeping as tightly in step as those in costume to the music of its brass band. And as the Redeemer, tottering a little where the ground sloped, was borne triumphantly back to His altar, the band struck up a familiar air. It was the Marines' Hymn.

—JUDITH THURMAN

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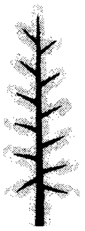

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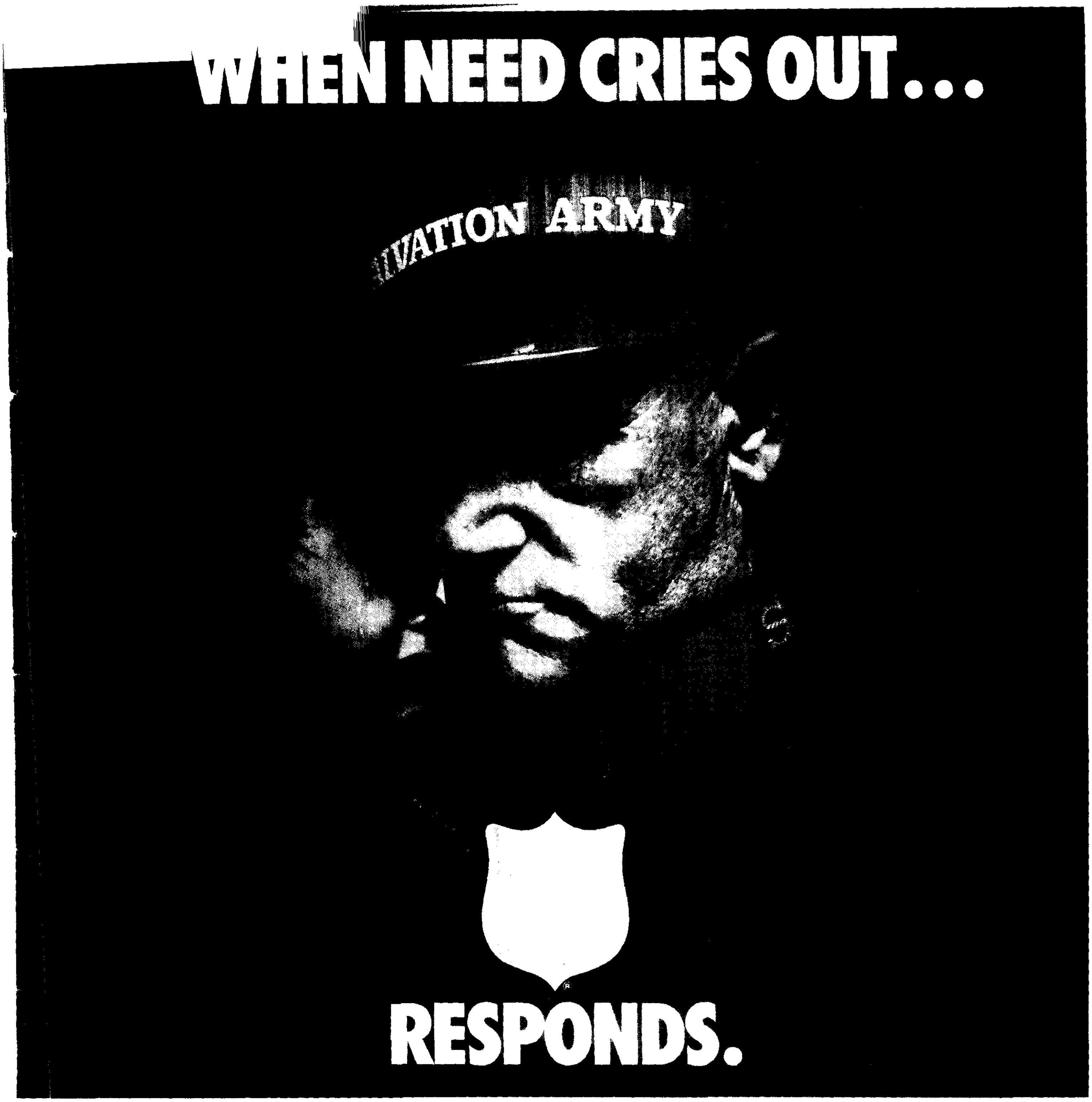

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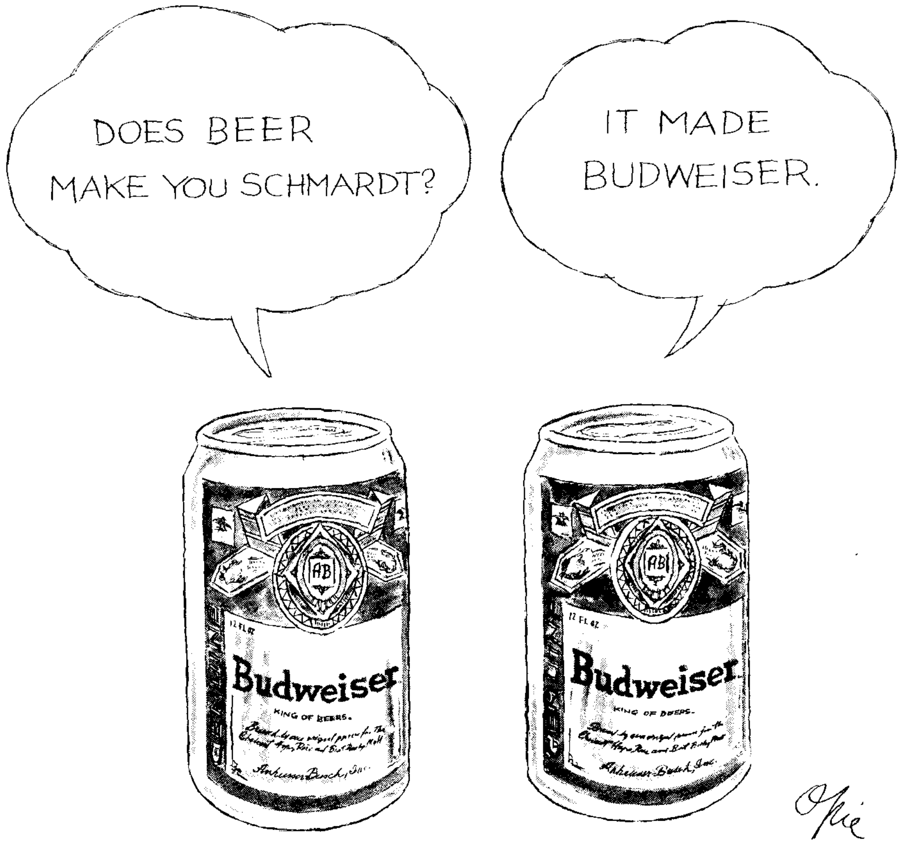
THE THEATRE

Colloquy

LEE BLESSING'S "A Walk in the Woods," at the Booth, is set in a glade near Geneva, and it consists entirely of the conversation of a Soviet diplomat named Andrey Botvinnik and his American counterpart, John Honeyman, who are there, for about a year, to try to negotiate an arms agreement. Botvinnik is skeptical, humorous, and pessimistic about results—he has been through this before—and Honeyman is earnest, emotional, and hopeful: if only they keep working, they cannot fail. Stereotypes are what they seem at first sight—the wise, seasoned European and the innocent, eager American—but not for long. One of the many pleasures the play affords is that of watching the molds crack as the characters deepen and, above all, connect. Their humanity becomes as apparent as their disparate styles. Honeyman is wryly aware of his own priggishness. Botvinnik's mocking manner masks a profound despair; he realizes that peace lies not in the decisions of negotiators and the nations they represent but in other, more powerful and grubbier hands, and that the best he and Honeyman can hope for is friendship, which they do achieve. "A Walk in the Woods," which I first saw a couple of years ago at the O'Neill Playwrights Conference, in Waterford, Connecticut, is indeed a play of ideas, and it is written with wit and polish, but it is just as much the story of two men and of a friendship.

Under Des McAnuff's able direction, this comedy, which never conceals the harshness and feeling beneath, is always satisfying. The use of music for mood is extremely telling, as are some of the visual effects—whirling leaves that fill the stage as summer turns to fall, for example. It isn't often that an evening devoted to the conversation of two characters on abstract matters can hold our attention completely. The conversation is, as I say, polished and absorbing, but it is the two men, as drawn by Mr. Blessing and as portrayed by Robert Prosky and Sam Waterston, who make the difference. As Botvinnik, Mr. Prosky, his broad, beaming Slavic face making him a perfect fit, has the plummier role—he gets the laughs—but Mr. Waterston, one of our most sophisticated actors, plays the earnest Midwestern Honeyman with all the innocence the role demands, and with much feeling besides. The setting, the lighting, and the costumes, all admirable, were designed by Bill Clarke, Richard Riddell, and Ellen V. McCartney, respectively.



GREAT TWO-LINERS REVISITED

"WENCESLAS SQUARE," the last play by the late Larry Shue, opened last week at the Public. Mr. Shue, in case you need reminding, was the author of "The Foreigner," which is so subtly and firmly constructed and so clear that it could last forever, and of the entertaining comedy "The Nerd," which is still running on Broadway; "Wenceslas Square" is an odd one that, for all the enjoyment it offers, seems to evaporate before our eyes. It is about the memories of a scenic designer named Dooley, who in 1974 paid a short visit to Czechoslovakia with a professor of his named Vince. Vince had been there in 1968, during that interlude of freedom called the Prague Spring, and he has written an as yet unpublished book about it, which he brings with him as he looks up old acquaintances; Dooley, with camera, is to supply the photographs. The play opens some years later with Dooley as narrator, now grown older and portrayed by Victor Garber, and immediately shifts to 1974, with a younger actor, Bruce Norris, in the role. The action itself consists of an assortment of brief encounters with an assortment of people, making do or not under Soviet repression. Although the atmosphere is often sombre, even menacing, no opportunity for comedy has been overlooked by Mr. Shue or Jerry Zaks, who directed with tender loving care and invention. As we move from person to person, from place to place, and back and forth in time, the effect is kaleidoscopic, but, with Mr. Zaks at the helm, not as puzzling as it could have been.

The performances, by a cast of only four, are pretty wonderful. Jonathan Hadary is the professor; Mr. Garber plays all the other men and Dana Ivey all the women—quick-change artists, both of them, and, when need be, expert comedians. At this point in his tragically short career—he died in a plane crash in 1985, at the age of thirty-nine—Mr. Shue was striking out into new territory, he was still as adept as ever when trying to be funny, somewhat insubstantial when trying to be serious. But who knows what could have been? The spare setting—a few chairs and tables moved from place to place—was designed by Loren Sherman and lighted by Paul Gallo; the costumes were designed by William Ivey Long.

THE most important point to be made about "Tapman," by Karen Jones-Meadows, at the Hudson Guild, is that it brings back Moses Gunn, after far too long an absence, and in a part that is worthy of his attention. He plays a famous blues singer and guitarist at the end of his career, too unsteady in his mind to go onstage without drinking and then too unsteady to go on at all. It must be said at once that Mr. Gunn, who is one of our finest actors, is not a professional singer, yet when he sings a few bars here and there we are never in the slightest doubt about the character's ability and prestige. His grown daughter and small grandson urge him on and encourage him, but his new wife, considerably younger than he is, wants him to quit, to retire comfortably with her. He spends quite a lot of time raging, especially at the three other members of his group, who, understandably, decide to go on without him, and arrange a well-paying gig in Texas. He joins them, of course, and there he is in his dressing room, waiting for his cue, his daughter and grandson beside him, and the booze in his hand. The ending is pleasantly surprising and convincing, in a strange sort of way; "Tapman," in fact, is one of the very few plays these days with a second act much stronger than the first. Under Samuel P. Barton's direction, all goes well. Seret Scott is delightful as the daughter, and Dean Irby, Merlin Santana, Kim Hamilton, Helmar Augustus Cooper, Guy Davis, and John P. Rice are credible in other roles.

—EDITH OLIVER

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[*From the Rocky Hill Gazette, of Rocky Hill, N.J.*]

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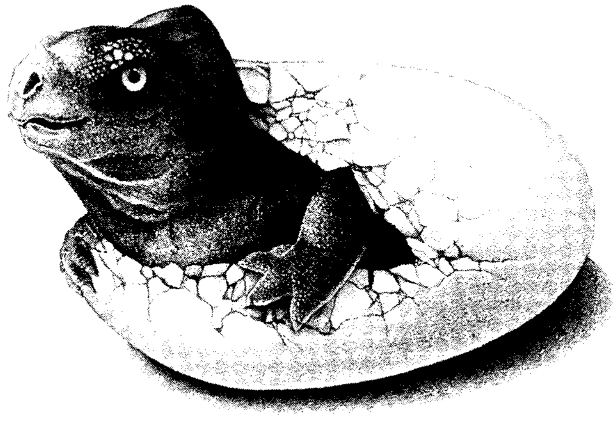

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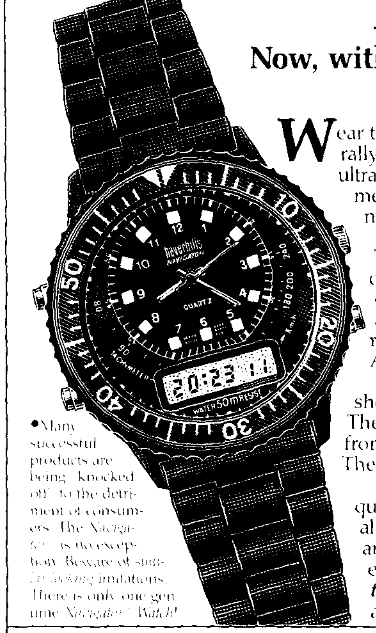

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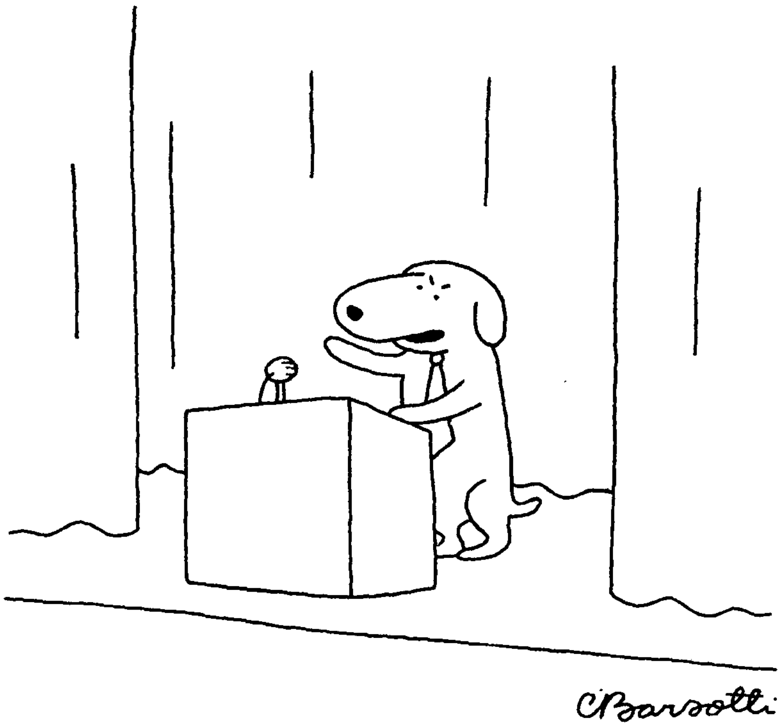
POPULAR MUSIC

The Machine Age

ANNIE LENNOX lets out a wild scream at the beginning of “I Need a Man,” on Eurythmics’ latest album, “Savage” (RCA). The scream is out of character for Lennox, whose agile vocal asides are often so well placed that they could have been programmed in by machine, but it’s even more shocking coming from the character she seems to be playing in the song—a shy woman who was sitting in the audience at a club and has been invited up onstage by the band to sing. Onstage, the woman turns into a monster, toying with and spitting out the song’s vampish lines so that they become threats. (“There’s just one thing that I’m looking for and he don’t wear a dress,” she yells.) Especially with Dave Stewart’s Keith Richards-ish guitar chords prodding her voice along, Lennox’s exaggerated, rubbery drawl recalls Mick Jagger in one of his misogynistic frenzies, although the song can’t be considered a Rolling Stones homage (or even parody). It’s as if the singer in “I Need a Man” had heard a Stones song (“Under My Thumb,” or maybe “Ride On, Baby”) twenty years ago and been so astonished and frightened by what it made her feel that she had to wreak havoc on Jagger, whose scorn had brought her to life. She becomes the woman of those songs in such caricatured clarity that she ends up swallowing her creator whole.

“I Need a Man” is an atypical triumph for Eurythmics, because, for all its sense of play, the band has rarely been as provocative as its variable setup would allow it to be. Starting off as a self-sufficient duo, with Stewart as instrumental jack-of-all-trades and Lennox as vocalist, it fashioned shiny, electronically driven trifles that cut through more forcefully as hits on the radio—“Sweet Dreams (Are Made of This),” “Here Comes the Rain Again”—than as part of the larger statement its albums were intended to make. Around the time of its first hits, in 1983, the mere presence of synthesized rhythms and textures could still fool listeners into mistaking a conventional pop song for a treatise on the dislocation of our too modern times, or some such guff. In its last two albums (1985’s “Be Yourself Tonight” and 1986’s “Revenge”), the band filled out its lineup until it approximated the heft and look of a rock band, with Stewart sticking mainly to guitar and Lennox throwing herself into the role of lead singer. Aside from the acidic kiss-off of 1985’s “Would I Lie to You?,” the point of the exercise—that the rock-and-roll band is just as artificial a construct as a man, a woman, and their favorite electronic devices—had no resonance, because condescension toward rock had been built into Lennox’s attitude from the start. (No matter what Lennox fantasizes herself to be, Stewart always looks like a nameless session musician who just wants to be left alone with his guitar.) Her haughty demeanor and clipped speech, her close-cropped hair and fashionable leathers never hold out the possibility of androgynous openness that she was known for early in her career. Rather, they are the trappings of a perky, efficient career woman—say, Julie Andrews on Vivarin—for whom this silly pop music is just a stepping stone on the way to a good, solid profession, like Hollywood.

Like many performers who fancy themselves deep thinkers, Lennox is never at a loss to claim some grand theme for whatever she’s working on, and “Savage” is no exception. According to Lennox, many of the album’s songs are about a “dream goddess/sex kitten gone wrong.” That would be as laughable as usual, but this time Lennox’s chronic humorlessness is suited to the cold, dark, cramped settings that her voice spirals out of. Pared back down to the duo they began as, Lennox and Stewart once again lean on the synthesizer, with the contrast of natural instruments providing nostalgic comment, but these new songs point up the frilliness of their earliest albums. Playing off the imposed order of the piston-pulse rhythms and flat murmurs, the curlicues of Lennox’s phrasing sound wary, elusive, unsure of the next move. In that distance between her voice and the instrumental arrangement, the overdramatized breakdown of “Beethoven (I Love to Listen To)” and the escapist fantasy of “I’ve Got a Lover (Back in Japan)” are scary beyond the intentions of the lyrics. The expected lax moments occur on “Savage”: Eurythmics has never come up with a melody whose next measure you can’t predict; and Lennox still relishes prissy bits of language like “I was eloquent with rage.” And in the end the album’s over-all junk ratio is only slightly improved from that of the band’s first records, although the highs are higher. But the harshness of “Savage” is more inviting, more open to the listener, than the earlier smirking gentility. On “I Need You,” a folkish departure from the album’s relentless circuitry, whose mock-amateur opening and message of desire turned vengeful are meant to parallel “I Need a Man,” Lennox sings, “I need someone to listen to the ecstasy I’m faking.” Whether she is hurling those words at



“And since when is loyalty a bad word?”

a lover or, more interestingly, at her audience, they're evidence of an unexpected reserve of candor (however ugly) in a career where candor has always seemed beside the point.

“SUBSTANCE” (Qwest), a two-record compilation by the British quartet New Order, is as exemplary a summing up of the group's career as anyone could have hoped for. The album also epitomizes a strain of sombre, thickly orchestrated dance music that has become an eighties commonplace and, too often, an eighties cliché—the stuff of car advertisements. New Order songs such as “Temptation” and “Perfect Kiss” are, as expected, crowded with chattering sequencers, stray hums, and crushing downbeats, yet instead of conveying manipulation the synthesizers (played by Gillian Gilbert) are as fluid and surprising as their natural counterparts. Bernard Sumner and Peter Hook phrase their guitar and bass against the mechanical chatters and sighs, coming in at odd angles with the guitar pitched low and the bass arching up high, conveying a quiet anxiety.

Lost in a music so dense with echoes, Sumner's boyish voice, the only one in most of these songs, struggles to make itself heard and doesn't always succeed. Squarely in the venerable rock mold of expressive non-singers, he pushes against his vocal limits, reaching for notes that are beyond him, his faltering coos slipping between the thin spaces in the onrushing mechanical beats. The lyrics exist only as a chain of thoughts inside the mind of the singer; they are usually pitched to an invisible “you” who may or may not be listening. Sumner presses the monologue-like lyrics (as in “Subculture” and “Bizarre Love Triangle”) close to your ear—it's as if you were on a taxi ride with a stranger who, for no clear reason, has decided to tell you the story of his life while the lights of the city speed past the windows, illuminating his face as he speaks. As you follow the course of this album, you hear Sumner's voice leaping beyond his monotone while the rhythms become more supple, less impressed by their own flashiness, flowing instead of cracking and breaking. The band's new single, “Touched by the Hand of God” (Factory), released after “Substance,” has a swooping momentum oddly appropriate to its theme of erotic yearning for someone long gone; it seems to condense all of “Substance” in one ecstatic final breath. When Sumner sings the title phrase, there's a touch of awe in his whisper which would sound suspicious coming from a grander singer.

ONE of the trends in eighties popular music has been the proliferation of performers for whom the conventions of rock and roll mean nothing—mean even less than the music of the forties crooners did to the earliest rock fans. This is often read as a conscious expression of dissatisfaction with rock's gradual absorption into the larger entertainment industry as a willing source of ad jingles and tabloid gossip, but it's just as likely a simple testimonial to the passage of time. Each pop-music generation speaks in the vernacular that the radio and records of its era teach it, be it rockabilly or some previously unimaginable hybrid. Despite sentimental attachments to a certain genre, the more democratic pop-music ideal is that good records can be made by anyone in any style. Everything about the Pet Shop Boys, from their name on down—just what could it mean?—seems to invite the ridicule of a rebellion-mongering rock audience (if such a thing still exists), especially their reliance on the glitziest, most repetitive dance-music flourishes to flesh out their arrangements. Yet, with “Pet Shop Boys, Actually” (EMI-Manhattan), the singer Neil Tennant and the keyboard player Chris Lowe have made an album that not only is rich in arresting songs but has sonic layers and a craftsmanlike tone that make it work as a whole in the established rock tradition of the album—an irony they must relish in an era of singles.

As used by Eurythmics, New Order, and the Pet Shop Boys, disco's neutrality and robotic insistence shirk the expressive weight of traditional rock and soul, paring everything down to a single, unyielding pulse whose cold comfort is its reliability. Disco has always been the sound of leisure, the soundtrack of consumption. That isn't just a matter of the way it's used but carries over into the way the music itself works: any sound, from whooshing strings to tinkling piano, from rock guitar to a breaking bottle, can be subsumed into the open-ended flow of a disco song. Just beneath the glossy hum of the rhythm machines on “Actually,” a constant array of sounds impresses itself upon your ear almost subliminally: a light patter of Latin percussion; horns that may or may not be artificial; a short

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run of piano notes; a human exhalation that may or may not be artificial. As another effect, on top of that ceaseless supply of aural distraction, Neil Tennant sings in what can be called nobody's voice—a little effete, a little agitated, but mostly just tired, his carefully maintained deadpan tone betraying more regret than he realizes. The remorse of "It's a Sin" sounds as if it were beyond his capacity for feeling; he has to struggle to keep from being overtaken by the song's exuberant melody—the sort of thing that Michel Legrand might have tossed off in an idle moment, but played at twice the normal speed. One of Tennant's rare moments of fulfillment comes in a funny ode to "Shopping."

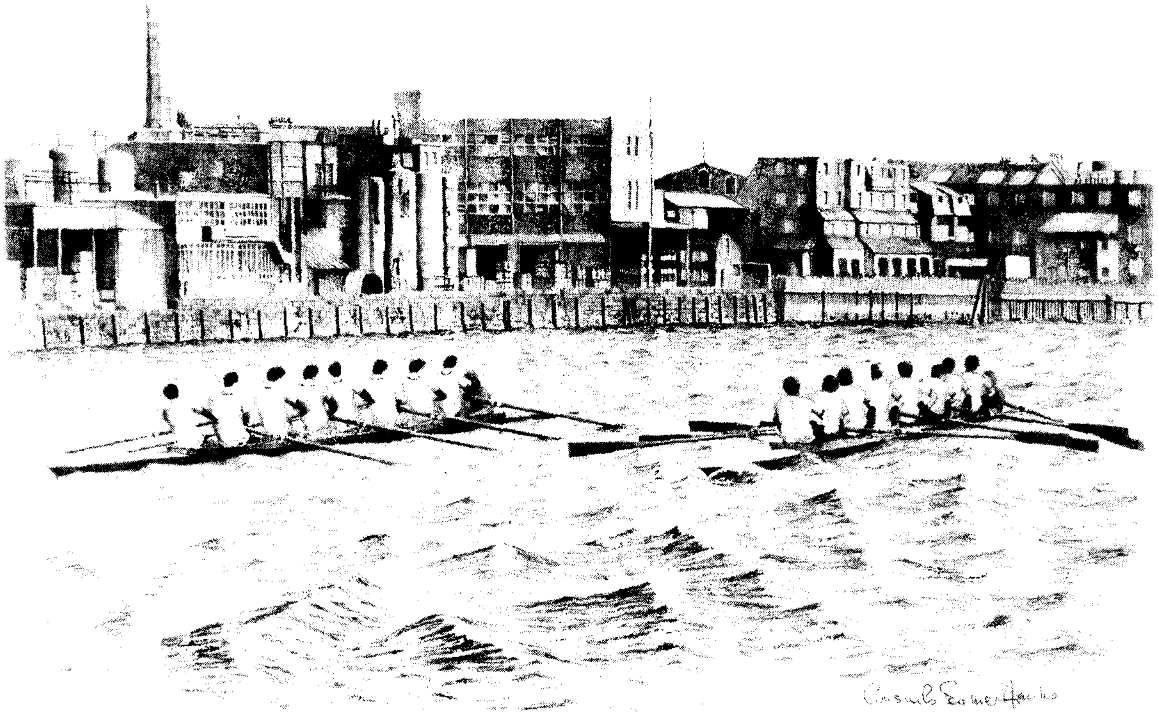
Aside from the ballad "It Couldn't Happen Here," which has a lush sadness, the most affecting track on "Actually" is Tennant's duet with Dusty Springfield, "What Have I Done to Deserve This?" Most pop duets are rigged affairs, concocted to attract the biggest possible combination of the two performers' audiences. But Springfield and Tennant, as unlikely a pair as you could imagine, work with each other in unexpected ways. Springfield, the sultry, heavy-lidded icon of Swinging London, and a matchless singer, sounds so unscathed she could be projecting herself from 1966, a carefree image of sixties hedonism visited upon her beleaguered eighties counterpart. The song she and Tennant toss back and forth is one of abandonment, and the light but startling edge of anger in Tennant's singing makes you think that he is berating himself for having ever been foolish enough to believe in the romanticism of Springfield's old hits. He isn't just singing to an estranged lover who happens to be Springfield; he's singing to the Springfield whose "You Don't Have to Say You Love Me" made him believe in the possibility of romance in the first place.

The album's crucial song, though, the one that all the others revolve around and refer to, is "Rent." The light, telegraphing beat and glittering chords pull you into the song unawares, setting you up for a hook-laden confection. Tennant is telling his lover, in short, polite phrases, what it is like being kept: "You dress me up. I'm your puppet. You buy me things. I love it." The only regret he has is almost glossed over—"We never ever argue, never calculate the currency we've spent"—on the way to the line that sums up the song: "I love you. You pay my rent." There's no bitterness in Tennant's reading of those lines; in fact, the glazed, pleased singing is the only hint of contentment or of eroticism on the record. But "Rent" isn't a song about sex; it's a song about the reduction of everything to currency. In "Rent," everyone has his price, and the sounds that lovers make are only the sounds of money changing hands. As the song winds down, a background voice lightly chimes in with "It's easy, it's so easy," conjuring up the innocent memory of Buddy Holly only to laugh at it. "It's so easy to fall in love," Holly once sang. Neil Tennant, money firmly in hand, knows very well how easy it is.

Like many makers of the supposedly rootless electronic pop tunes that have become a signature of their generation, the Pet Shop Boys know that the only power they have is that of perfect consumers, or, as in "Rent," of perfect products. They are suspicious of the broad, messy displays of emotion of an earlier rock era, which not only is irrevocably lost to them but feels irredeemably false. What did Dusty Springfield and Buddy Holly ever do for them *except lie to them, shame* them? On their new single, "Always on My Mind" (Parlophone), the Pet Shop Boys *laugh at the conceit of pop* history and end up the butt of their own joke. "Always on My Mind" has been sung by, among others, Elvis Presley and Willie Nelson. But the bravado of those versions always concealed that the lyrics are the apology of a jerk. The words "Little things I should have said and done, I just never took the time, but you were always on my mind" can only prompt the response "Thanks for nothing" from the person being serenaded. On one level, the Pet Shop Boys' version is about bringing the jerk out, front and center. They take the song at a rapid, nervous clip and cram every space with charging, mock-symphonic blasts, turning the song into a gleeful good riddance. But Tennant isn't laughing; he sings with unusual tenderness, so that his voice floats above the merry din the synthesizers have made of the song's lovely melody. (The clamor of the arrangement makes his singing sound faster than it is.) Pulled in beyond his own strength, he now takes his place alongside every other singer who has been seduced by this foolish, irresistible piece of schmalz—at least, for the duration of the song. —Mark Moses

THE SPORTING SCENE

THE LAST AMATEURS



ON the last page of the scrapbook I kept during my sophomore year at Yale is a map cut out from the New London *Day* of June 10, 1978, showing the course for that afternoon's Harvard-Yale boat race, on the Thames River, near New London, Connecticut. My crew had already beaten Harvard over two thousand metres (about a mile and a quarter), the standard distance for rowing races, to win the Eastern Championship, so I expected to overlay that Thames map with clippings of our success in the "four-miler"—the oldest and most tradition-laden intercollegiate athletic event in this country. Instead, scrawled underneath the map is my final journal entry for that season: "We lost by 13 seconds. The Harvard six man was bent over unable to talk, and Dave Potter [our stroke] was in convulsions. Before I graduate I will win this race. I don't care now what I have to do, but I will get back in the six seat and beat those guys. . . . I will not let myself down."

During the next two years, our crew trained together, ate together, and often roomed together. In the final month before each four-miler, when we left Yale for an isolated camp on the Thames, even our pulses seemed to be in unison. The dream of ending Yale's fifteen-year losing streak against Harvard propelled us to another Eastern Championship, and several of us earned places on the United States national or Olympic team. But we let ourselves down. In 1979, we lost to Harvard by 2.5 seconds, and in 1980 by 8.4 seconds. It's the custom in big rowing races for the losing team to give their shirts to the winners, and even now I would trade my Olympic jacket to have had Charlie Altekruse, the Harvard captain, hand over his crimson shirt between the finish buoys on the Thames.

Though it no longer commands the national attention it once did, the Harvard-Yale race remains an important symbol for American intercollegiate sport, and represents the best and worst moments of my own athletic career, so I was alarmed when I heard last February that its antecedent—the four-and-a-quarter-mile Oxford-Cambridge Boat Race, on the Thames in London—might not be rowed. A dispute over the selection of the Oxford crew had escalated into mutiny, and Cambridge was refusing to row against mutineers. In the London *Times*, one Oxford coxswain, an American whom I had competed against in the 1984 United States Olympic trials, had written an editorial headlined "IDEALS OF THE BOAT RACE JUST A MYTH." I made arrangements to fly to England, but even before I got on the plane I began to realize that British and American intercollegiate sports have evolved quite differently. It now seemed that the Oxbridge system—of gentlemanly club competition—might at long last have become outmoded, and that more than a hundred and fifty years of tradition could be coming to an end.

THE original Oxford-Cambridge Boat Race, in June, 1829, marked the beginning of the second intercollegiate sport. The first was cricket, which Oxford and Cambridge had begun playing some years before, and, in fact, it was a member of the Cambridge cricket club who challenged a friend at Oxford to gather a crew and race on a twisting course at Henley-on-Thames. In that first contest, Cambridge was heavily favored by the bookmakers, because scouting reports indicated that the Cambridge crew rowed better than Oxford, and because Cambridge won the coin toss and chose to start on the side of the river favored by the inside of two major bends. There were no lanes to guide the boats, however, and the two boats crashed into each other almost at once. The race was restarted, and Oxford won.

The second race was postponed for seven years by an epidemic of cholera and then by a dispute over the

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course. In the late eighteen-forties, the race was halted again, for two years, because Cambridge refused to stop hiring professional watermen as coaches. In 1855, both the Cam River, in Cambridge, and the Isis River, in Oxford, froze, and the crews were unable to train. In 1856, the race moved permanently to the Thames Tideway, in London—a four-and-a-quarter-mile S curve, from Putney to Mortlake—and, except during the two World Wars, it has been held there every March or April since. To date, there have been a hundred and thirty-three Boat Races. Oxford has won sixty-three and Cambridge sixty-nine, and there has been one dead heat. All told, Cambridge is roughly a hundred boat lengths ahead.

Like the Royal Family, the Boat Race is a source of passionate diversion for the British public and a vehicle for exporting traditional British values overseas. Rowing correspondents from four of the British national newspapers report almost daily on the preparation of the crews, and on Race Day the country divides itself more or less arbitrarily between the Light Blues, of Cambridge, and the Dark Blues, of Oxford. Large billboards in the tube stations throughout London give directions to the course. The race is usually attended by thousands, and the BBC broadcasts it to millions of people worldwide. Afterward, exhibition races between the Oxbridge crews are staged throughout the world. For British rowers, the race inspires at least the same level of commitment as the Harvard-Yale race did for me, and a university "blue" (light or dark) earned by rowing in the Boat Race often leads to a successful career in the City, the financial hub of London.

To an observer looking up the racecourse from Putney Bridge on a windless, overcast afternoon, the Thames seems a uniform expanse of gray that turns to silt brown whenever the sun pokes through. As the tide comes in, the gray or brown spreads up the cobblestones of Putney Embankment, over a narrow roadway, and into the boat bays of a row of boathouses owned by the London Rowing Club, the Thames Rowing Club, and several leading British banks. On the north bank, opposite, are the steps of Fulham Wall, near Fulham Palace, the former home of the bishops of London. Coxswains use the steps to measure the height of the tide and to determine how much water is flowing over the shoals and sandbars along the course. A good coxswain can also look at the gray of the water and tell where the tidal current is strongest. The Boat Race is started when the incoming tide is at its fastest, and if the wind is calm the stream of the tidal current, barely the width of two eight-oared shells rowing abreast, is an extra push worth as many as ten boat lengths over the course. Race Day, however, is seldom calm. Driven by the westerly winds of late March, the Tideway usually becomes a sea of rollers rebounding in random patterns from Fulham Wall. If the wind shifts to northwesterly, directly against the tide, the rollers break into white horses capable of swamping a shell.

The original Oxford eight-oared racing boat of 1829, preserved in good condition at the South Kensington Science Museum, was more than adequate for almost any combination of current, wind, and waves. It was built from lapstraked oak planks and is forty-five feet long and four feet across the beam, and weighs six hundred pounds. It has a keel and a high freeboard. The oarsmen balanced themselves on narrow thwarts and propelled the boat with oars of solid oak. By 1846, the invention of iron outriggers to support the oarlocks had made it possible to reduce the width of a rowing boat by half, and in the eighteen-fifties the keel was dropped and the hull took on the low profile and smooth bottom of a racing shell. Shells are dramatically faster in flat water, but when the wind blows the Boat Race becomes the rowing equivalent of a steeplechase. In 1859, Cambridge, rowing one of these lighter, narrower shells, became the first of several Boat Race crews to sink.

The first Harvard-Yale race took place in 1852; it was two miles long and was held on Lake Winnepesaukee, New Hampshire. In 1878, the Harvard-Yale race became an annual four-mile event—an apparent duplication of the Boat Race which led to several races between the Oxbridge and American crews and also to a steady trickle of American graduates rowing in Oxbridge boats. Actually, the British and American races have about as much in common as cricket and baseball, or rugby and American football. The Connecticut course is a placid, almost straight stretch of river divided by buoys into separate lanes. When conditions are poor, the race is postponed. The difference between the two racecourses reflects a profound difference between the British and American approaches to sport. As one old Blue explained to me, the American race would be great preparation for the rest of life if the rest of life were also fair.

What the two races did have in common—at least initially—was a tradition of boat clubs governed by student presidents and coached by groups of amateurs. But America never had a large number of people available to become amateur rowing coaches, and eventually it was thought that a full-time professional would be better able to develop young talent from year to year and to produce faster crews. In 1905, Harvard broke ranks and hired a professional. Yale followed suit the next year. By the mid-nineteen-sixties, the best American university crews were training intensively and year-round at the two-thousand-metre distance, and it was not unheard of for an undergraduate here to begin rowing in college and graduate as a member of the United States Olympic team. The Oxbridge system, however, has remained essentially unchanged since the eighteen-thirties. In each university, the captains of the individual college crews and old Blues in residence every year elect a president of the University Boat Club, and it is his task to produce a crew from the undergraduate and graduate students for the Boat Race. In theory, the president has sole power over his boat club. In practice, he invites a head coach to develop and supervise the crew's training and invites a team of coaches to spend about a fortnight each with the crew. Proponents of the system argue that it is the best way for the sport to build character, but they quietly acknowledge that it is not the best way to train oarsmen. In recent years, the strategy of both Oxford and Cambridge has been to recruit British, American, and Canadian Olympic-class rowers, who, in the words of one Oxford don, "leaven the loaf."

IN 1987, Oxford's head coach was Dan Topolski, a forty-one-year-old Oxford grad with black hair, a tanned face, and a broken-looking nose. He describes himself as a free-lance writer rather than as a rower or a coach, although he won a gold medal in the 1977 Lightweight World Championships and has coached the British women's national team as well as Oxford. From his father, the illustrator Feliks Topolski, he inherited an artist's touch with people, which between 1976 and 1985 had helped him win ten races in a row—the longest Oxford winning streak in the history of the Boat Race. Topolski himself had rowed for Oxford in 1967 and 1968, when there were Yale graduates in the crew. From them he learned the advantage of American bravura in the unpredictable Boat Race, and as a coach he took pride in his ability to blend mature international competitors with wet-behind-the-ears British undergraduates. He was infamous for stalking American oarsmen at the World Championships.

Christopher Clark was racing at the French National Championship in Vichy, preparing for the 1984 United States Olympic trials, when Topolski suggested he apply to Oxford. Clark is a burly, brooding man from Southern California, who seems most at peace when his skin is tanned and bright sunshine justifies his wearing mirrored sunglasses and loud beach shorts. He is six feet six inches tall and weighs just over two hundred pounds—about the average size of a world-class oarsman. (Smaller men give less momentum to the shell.) Clark learned to row during two years at Orange Coast College, in Costa Mesa, California. In 1980, he transferred to Stanford University, and then, in 1981, in search of a fast crew, he left Stanford for the University of California at Berkeley. There he earned the nickname Heater, for sudden flashes of temper—which could translate into flashes of brilliance with an oar. After graduation, he worked in the kitchen at a Berkeley sorority while rowing on the fringe of the United States national team. Clark lost at the Olympic trials and applied too late to be accepted at Oxford that fall, but he reapplied successfully in 1985 and also became the spare man on the 1985 United States team. Topolski was on hand at the 1985 World Championships, at Hazewinkel, Belgium, to witness what was probably the best race of Clark's life.

The night before the finals, one of the two Americans in the pair-oared shell dropped out because of illness. Ordinarily, the entry would have scratched; a pair involves such precise chemistry between the oarsmen that months of practice may be needed before a new combination of rowers can steer a straight course, let alone row fast. To everyone's astonishment, though, Heater got in the pair with the remaining rower, a lieutenant

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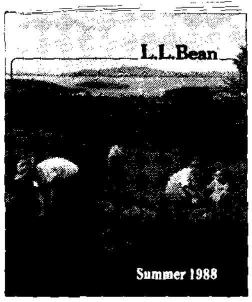

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from Annapolis named Daniel Lyons, and they did well enough to finish seventh in the world.

No American oarsman in recent years has had an easy time adapting to Oxford training, and Clark was no exception. Like most of the men who preceded him, he loved what he called the "academic experience"—the Gothic architecture, the tutors, the pomp and pageantry. On the other hand, there was no love lost between him and Topolski. Clark told me that he thought Topolski's training methods were "archaic;" they wasted several hours a day, he said, and produced oarsmen who were "painful to watch." Because he was the top performer on most of Topolski's tests—on the water in single sculls, in the weight room, and on special rowing machines called ergometers—nobody said much when, as happened frequently, Clark chose to train on his own rather than with the squad.

In 1986, Clark's first year at Oxford, Cambridge had on board a couple of British Olympic rowers, including John Pritchard, a member of the 1980 British Olympic eight. Pritchard was a superb oarsman, with spirit enough to overcome Cambridge's ten consecutive losses. Cambridge also invited Neil Campbell, the coach of Canada's Olympic gold-medal eight, to help prepare the crew. The pundits heralded this Cambridge team as a "streak breaker."

Three weeks before the race, after a lacklustre series of practice races against local rowing clubs, Topolski made a desperate attempt to bolster his crew. He replaced an eighteen-year-old British undergraduate named Tony Ward with Graham Jones, an Australian international rower. Topolski had met Jones at the 1982 World Championships and had described him at the time as "just what the doctor ordered." Jones rowed for Oxford in 1983, 1984, and 1985, but then quit the squad to devote himself to his studies. His late return to the Blue Boat served only to demoralize the crew. Within two minutes of the start of the 1986 Boat Race, Cambridge was more than a boat length in front. On the Oxford boat, Chris Clark soon realized, he said later, that "there was nothing to do but pray that lightning struck Cambridge." The night of the race, at Oxford's annual rowing dinner, at the Savoy Hotel, Clark stood before the assembled oarsmen and swore he would come back in 1987 with some of his friends from the United States national team and "kick Cambridge's ass."

The first of those friends to enroll the following year was Dan Lyons, Clark's partner from the World Championships of 1985. He had been finishing his naval commitment and training for the 1986 World Championships, in which he won a gold medal. Lyons grew up around boathouses in Philadelphia, and began coxing when he was ten and rowing when he was twelve. Ever since he saw the film "Chariots of Fire," in 1984, he had wanted to row for Cambridge, which he considered the "bastion of amateur sport," but after Cambridge won in 1986 and Chris Clark informed him that Oxford's current crew was "dogmeat," the challenge was too much for Lyons to resist. He is a self-described "hopeless romantic" and "conservative who doesn't do weird things," and his heroes are "nineteenth-century men living in the twentieth century—like Churchill, Patton, and MacArthur."

Jonathan Fish, a coxswain on the 1985 United States national team, followed Lyons to Oxford. Fish had graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 1984 and was working as an accountant at Arthur Young, in Manhattan. More than anything, he wanted to earn a place on the 1988 Olympic team, and a coxswain, after all, needs a crew. Before he left for Oxford, Fish told me that he had not been particularly interested in American grad school, but that Oxford appealed to him, and he thought the company of several American world medallists would keep him in contention for the Olympics. Fish is fairly tall for a coxswain—about five feet eight—and often must lose about twenty pounds to get down to the hundred-and-ten-pound international minimum weight. He is never underdressed and never at a loss for words. He saw a year at Oxford as material for a book, or, at least, a series of magazine articles, and arrived with notepads.

The next American oarsman to join Clark at Oxford was Christopher

Penny, a soft-spoken young man who had graduated from Princeton, and had won a silver medal in the 1984 Olympics. He has an easy, bashful smile and a gangling body that radiates a gentle confidence. Penny had met Topolski at the 1985 World Championships. Clark warned him repeatedly that rowing at Oxford was like "being a freshman again, where you have to prove yourself in silly tests all the time," but Penny wasn't worried. In any case, he was as much interested in studying medieval history as he was in rowing.

Probably the last student accepted at Oxford for the fall of 1986 was Chris Huntington, another world medallist, who had been in Clark's crew at Berkeley. Huntington had done well enough academically at Berkeley to have a reasonable chance of being accepted at Oxford, but it was September before he mailed his application for the term that began in October. Oxford has no absolute deadline for admission, however, and Huntington was admitted, partly because the new president of the Oxford University Boat Club, Donald H. M. Macdonald, had spent his summer term looking after the applications of oarsmen. By the end of the summer of 1986, Oxford had gathered four American world-class rowers and an American coxswain—more than half of a United States national team.

Donald Macdonald, when he rowed with Chris Clark in that losing 1986 crew, was the oldest man to row in the history of the Boat Race. He was thirty-one, was married, and had three children under four. He has a long face, wavy brown hair, and a bright, friendly smile that conceals whatever he is thinking. He looks like a functionary in an insurance company, which is what he was before he decided that "a piece of my jigsaw was missing." Both his wife, Ruth, and the local vicar's wife had studied at Oxford, and together they supported his decision to apply. He was twenty-eight in 1984, when, with the help of a government student grant, he embarked on a degree in English. Macdonald had learned to row after high school, at the London Rowing Club, and he and his brother had rowed in an eight that was very successful on the rowing-club circuit. As soon as Macdonald was accepted at Oxford, he wrote Topolski for a training regimen. His first year at Oxford, he rowed in Isis, the reserve crew. His second year, 1986, he earned a seat in the Blue Boat, as the No. 1 boat is called. Then he decided he wanted to be president, even though the extra burden of the presidency would require him to extend his stay at Oxford for an additional year—a year not covered by the grant.

Macdonald told me that he approached Topolski about the presidency a few days after the 1986 Boat Race, when the crew arrived in Augusta, Georgia, for a series of exhibition races. Topolski mentioned the possible candidacy of Chris Clark, who was the only other rower eligible. Clark was erratic and explosive, Topolski admitted, but the presidency might reform him. Topolski changed his mind about Clark the very next day, Macdonald said, when Clark refused to race in the Oxford boat. Clark claims that he told Topolski before they left England that he would not row with Oxford in Georgia—that he had to leave to train with the United States team. But it seemed obvious to his teammates that he thought rowing in that boat so close to home would be humiliating. Other men filled in for Clark, but even months later, when I asked Topolski about the incident, his anger left him at a loss for words. He seemed to despise Clark for "abandoning" the crew. Clark seemed to despise him for creating it.

EACH oarsman in an eight-oared shell pulls on a single, twelve-foot-six-inch-long oar. The men who row on the port side are known as stroke, 6, 4, and 2, and the ones on the starboard side as 7, 5, 3, and bow. Most rowers are more effective on one side than on the other—only a few "switch-hit." Three of the four American rowers at Oxford that October—Clark, Penny, and Huntington—rowed on the port side, and so did Macdonald and his vice-president, a six-foot-nine-inch rower from Northern Ireland named Gavin Stewart. Macdonald is a mere six feet two and weighs a hundred and eighty-nine pounds. He would be fighting for a seat against four men who averaged six and a half feet and more than two hundred pounds. But in October the Boat Race was five months away, so the question of who would earn seats in the Blue Boat was less immediate than how the squad should train for it.

For years, American rowers had sent back horror stories about training at Oxford. They claimed that each of the coaches gave different and often contradictory instructions, and that seats in the Blue Boat could be inherited, earned by friendship, or won by election to the presidency. Worst of all was that the two workouts each day could drag on for

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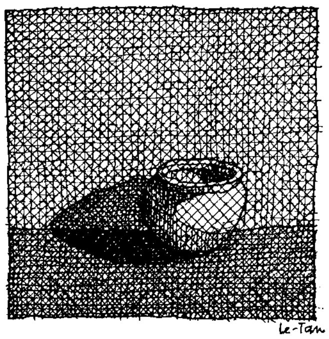
six or seven hours, which made it virtually impossible for an oarsman to take advantage of other university programs. Hard work was not a problem, the Americans claimed—they generally thought that they had worked much harder in the States. The problem was what rowers called the "Oxford piddle-around factor."



The Isis River, a narrow offshoot of the Thames, meanders through the city of Oxford. Lined on one side with old stone walls and on the other with pastures and elm trees, the Isis is a pleasant and convenient place to row—so pleasant that each of the thirty-one rowing colleges of Oxford University has its own boat club and enough rowers to fill half a dozen eight-man shells. There are about as many boathouses and active college rowers at Oxford as there are in Boston or Philadelphia. Each morning and afternoon, up to sixty boats are launched onto less than a mile of rowable water. A tradition that developed quite naturally is that of "bump" races. The college boats line up in single file and, at the sound of a cannon, attempt to ram the shell in front. The Oxford University Boat Club stores its shells on the Isis but needs more room to train in. Each week, therefore, the university oarsmen fetch their shells—as many as eight of them—from the boathouse, put them on a long trailer, and drive to less crowded waters. The training site changes depending on what is most convenient for that fortnight's coach, but most sites require a drive of thirty or forty minutes. Once there, the oarsmen bolt their riggers onto the shells and row. Afterward, wet and tired from the workout, they drive in search of a hill suitable for running up and down. Finally, the crew drives back to the Iffley Gym, at Oxford, for weight lifting. The oarsmen can expect to be back at their colleges between six and seven, for a choice of dinner, study, or sleep. It's a schedule that keeps Oxford rowers constantly tired and sick but also makes them tough enough—or so the theory goes—for whatever might happen on the Tideway.

In 1958, a young man named Reed Rubin, who had come to Oxford from Yale, rowed in a losing boat, and in 1959 he started a mutiny, during which he tried to persuade the Oxford crew to import American coaching methods. In the seventies, when Topolski began Oxford's winning streak, he relied on Harvard men like David Sawyier to push the crew to do more work, and as Topolski's reputation grew so did the amount of time he scheduled for training. (It was widely known among rowers that Topolski did not have much regard for academic work. In 1968, he graduated from Oxford with a fourth-class degree; today, the lowest is a third.) But by the early eighties the science of sports training called for much shorter, more intense workouts. Clark, Penny, Lyons, Huntington, and Fish had all trained under the new United States national coach, Kris Korzeniowski, and Korzeniowski and Topolski were, as one rower put it, "Poles apart." An Olympic workout under Korzeniowski, who helped to write the current training guidelines published by the Fédération Internationale des Sociétés d'Aviron, the governing body of international rowing, typically lasts between an hour and a half and two hours—either in racing shells or on ergometers—and he doesn't put much emphasis on running or on weight training. A hard week of training might be eleven workouts—five days of double practices, a day of single practices, and a day of rest—and take less than thirty hours. More work than that, Korzeniowski believes, won't make a crew go any faster and may slow it down. The schedule Topolski distributed for the first week of the fall term listed thirteen workouts and, piddling included, required nearly fifty hours to complete—"more work than 1986," he told his oarsmen, "because the crew lost in 1986."

Two of the Americans, Penny and Huntington, were willing to go along, more or less, with Topolski's training schedule. Clark, Lyons, and Fish, however, saw their group as, in Fish's words, "an influence that could bring Oxford rowing up to date." Paradoxically, their goal was to decrease Oxford's reliance on imported rowers, by creating at Oxford the type of rowing-development program used in American universities. In one year, they reckoned, they could "turn the place around."

All the Americans slogged through

Topolski's workouts for a week or two, and then they called for a meeting with him at a popular Oxford restaurant. Chris Clark, who seemed to have selected himself spokesman for the Americans, told Coach Topolski how much time they were willing to spend on workouts. The other Americans had never seen any athlete talk to a coach the way Clark talked to Topolski, but it seemed to have results. For a while, at least, much of the piddling, if not the work, was cut out. But the battle with Topolski continued. As Penny told me, "every week something else would creep back into the schedule, until pretty soon we were back to Square One." It took only a month and a half for the situation to blow up.

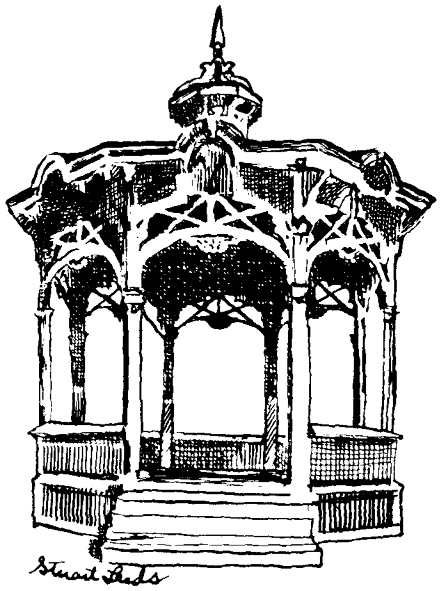
On an overcast Saturday in mid-November, the crew launched shortly after dawn from the Radley School boathouse, about seven miles southeast of Oxford. The row went well, and back inside the boathouse everyone gathered around a television set to watch videotapes of the practice. At the end of the video, the rowers expected to return to Oxford, but Coach Topolski stood up and said he wanted them to get back in the shells and work on what they had seen.

There was silence. Nobody moved. They couldn't believe that Topolski would ask for this much more of their time. After a few minutes of private discussion, the Americans met with Macdonald and Topolski on the boathouse balcony. In full view of the Radley schoolboys and the Oxford women's crew, which had also been rowing that day, they argued for almost an hour. Topolski made it clear that he would quit if the crew didn't row. The Americans picked up their bags and went back to Oxford, taking most of the crew with them. Topolski told me later, "I thought the others would row, but Macdonald didn't say, 'Yes, we're going on.' He'd been intimidated by the Americans. I was left like an ass."

Fish and Clark wanted to make Topolski's resignation permanent. If the crew didn't wish to coach themselves, Fish said, there were "plenty of coaches around Oxford ready to stab Topolski in the back." Macdonald didn't say much, but Penny and Huntington were able to control their more militant compatriots. By Wednesday of the next week, a new set of limitations was agreed to, and Coach Topolski came back. For the first time in the history of the Boat Race, however, control over the Oxford boat club seemed firmly in the hands of Americans.

ROWERS not only face backward, they race backward. They sprint from the starting line for the first twenty strokes, and only then settle to a sustainable cadence. It would be a lot more efficient physiologically—and a lot less painful—for them to row at a steady pace through the body of the race and sprint at the end. Psychologically, however, a slow start can be disastrous. In any rowing race, the crew that establishes a lead can see and react to its opponent. And in the Boat Race, because there are no lanes, the crew that creates an "open water" lead can move directly in front of the trailing crew, leaving it to row in "oar wash." "To have a winning crew," Hugh Matheson, an Oxford coach and Olympic silver medallist, has explained, "eight men must commit themselves from the very first stroke to a pace that they all feel they cannot sustain. And then the crew must somehow sustain that pace until its opponent breaks. The members of a winning crew do not have to like one another—some of the best crews are at each other's throats—but they must have absolute faith in one another to commit to the race from the very first stroke."

In selecting a crew, Coach Topolski typically considered the results of the various parts of his training program—the running, the weight lifting, the rowing—and then, when all the scores were in, he watched how different oarsmen rowed together and played his hunches. The five Americans had as little faith in that combined process as they had in his workouts. The final decisions, they felt, should be made on the water, by means of what is known as seat racing—in which rowers from one boat are switched one by one to another, to see which men make the boats go fastest. Seat racing is difficult for a coach to control. "It's hard for a coach to protect an oarsman he believes in," Matheson says. "It's even harder for him to get rid of an oarsman he cannot stand."



For the four port-side seats of the 1987 Blue Boat, there were at least five likely candidates: Chris Penny, Chris Huntington, Chris Clark, Donald Macdonald, and Gavin Stewart. On starboard, there were only three: Dan Lyons, Tom Cadoux-Hudson (a 1981 bronze medallist for Britain), and Richard Hull (a graduate student who had rowed at Cambridge as an undergrad). The obvious solution was to switch one of the port-side rowers to starboard. Topolski chose Chris Clark, who agreed but almost immediately asked to be switched back to port. His request was refused. Clark was not as strong that fall, even on port, as he had been in the previous spring. In June, he had torn some muscles between his ribs while he was training with Dan Lyons for the United States national team and had been unable to row again until September. In the eyes of most of the crew, the loss of training time, the success of his recruiting effort, and his tantrums combined to make Clark expendable. Clark believed that he could earn a seat on port. He also believed that if he failed on starboard Topolski would have an excuse to sack him. Oddly enough, the other Americans were not fully aware of Clark's clash with Topolski in Georgia. But people who had been there—including Clark's best friend, who was appalled by Clark's refusal to row—figured that Topolski had sworn to himself that Clark would never again row in the Blue Boat.

At the end of the first term, as the crew prepared to start a fortnight of intensive seat racing before Christmas, Clark seemed to panic. He was ill, and was rowing poorly, and he was complaining bitterly. Clark says that he told Macdonald he needed more time to adjust to rowing on starboard and asked that his seat race be postponed until January. When Macdonald refused, Clark decided to avoid the contest, and took a plane to Philadelphia for the holidays to train under Kris Korzeniowski. Before leaving, he sent a note to Jon Fish to explain that he was not being "pusillanimous" but

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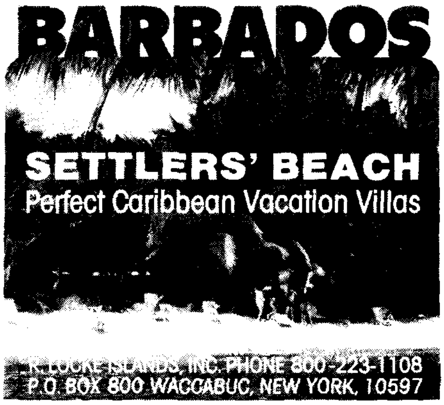

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simply recognizing that "avoidance is the best policy." The other members of the squad failed to see the distinction, but they were generally happy to have him gone. Morale was better when Heater was away. During Clark's absence, Gavin Stewart seat-raced Macdonald and won, dropping Macdonald to fourth man on the port side, after Huntington, Penny, and himself. In rowing terminology, the president now had "one foot in the water": he was the appropriate rower for anyone to challenge in order to move up into the boat.

Clark returned to the squad at the beginning of January, when conditions on the Thames Tideway, where the crew was practicing then, are typically at their worst. It took only one practice—a miserable workout with Clark on starboard—for Heater to explode. Back in the boathouse, he hurled a bowl of potato soup against the wall and stormed out. He was leaving for good, he said, but Jon Fish prevailed upon him to wait at their hotel while Huntington, Penny, and Lyons met with Topolski to plead his case.

The bar upstairs in the Thames Rowing Club, near Putney Bridge, is locked during the day, but so many of the members double as club bartenders that it is almost always possible to get a drink there. Like most British boathouse bars, it smells of spilled beer and sweat. Ordinarily, the odor would be unpleasant, but after a long, hard row the smell, the dark wood, and the faded photographs create an atmosphere that is warm and soothing. When Topolski, Huntington, Lyons, and Penny arrived, the bar was opened for them, and they sat down to talk.

Huntington said later that he half expected Topolski to sack Clark, and figured he probably deserved it. But Huntington was also aware of Clark's potential: they had won a PAC-10 championship together at Berkeley. He argued that if Clark couldn't switch successfully to starboard—and obviously he couldn't—he should be allowed to switch back. Huntington told the coach that Clark was "a hothouse plant who will blossom with time under the right conditions"—that is, on the port side. Topolski finally relented, not because he was impressed by the analogy but because, he claimed afterward, he had learned what happened when he crossed the Americans. He said that Clark would get one chance to prove himself, and added, "Let the chips fall where they may."

To everyone's surprise, Clark did blossom when he came back to port. He stopped complaining and started pulling. The crucial race that the crew now expected was between Clark and Macdonald for the last seat on the port side. On Monday afternoon in the last week of selection, however, Gavin Stewart found himself scheduled to seat-race against Clark the following morning. He concluded that Topolski had chosen to sacrifice him to save the president. In the morning, Stewart sent word that he was sick and couldn't row.

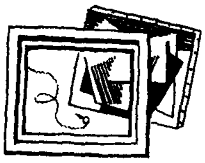
"Tuesday morning, when Gavin failed to show up," Jon Fish recalls, "we were huddled like bums around a couple of trash cans filled with wood, warming our hands, expecting that now Macdonald would have to race Clark." Instead, Clark was lined up to seat-race Chris Huntington, the strongest man on the port side. That race never took place. After only a few minutes on the Thames, the coxswains were so cold that they couldn't steer. On Wednesday and Thursday, Gavin Stewart came back to practice, but the Tideway was too rough for seat racing. On Friday, the crew had its regular day off. Saturday was the last day of seat racing before the Blue Boat was to be announced. Rather than risk the Tideway again, the crew moved to the calm water of Henley-on-Thames. Once again, Gavin Stewart called in sick. So did Chris Huntington. The only person Coach Topolski could race Clark against was Donald Macdonald.

HENLEY-ON-THAMES is secluded in the gently rolling countryside between Oxford and London. Every June since 1839, Henley has been the site of the Henley Royal Regatta, the Wimbledon or the Ascot of rowing. Gentlemen dust off their rowing blazers and straw boaters and, with their ladies, sip champagne and eat strawberries as the crews race by, two at a time, toward the finish line near the Leander Club. The regatta course is as straight as a drag strip. Log booms line the course to hold back fleets of punts and launches. In February, 1987, when the Oxford squad came to seat-race, log booms were unnecessary. The day was cold and quiet, and no one else was around.

It seemed clear to everyone rowing at Henley that afternoon that Topolski had designed the seat races to demonstrate Clark's weaknesses. Topolski thought that Clark lacked both the attitude and the conditioning for the long Boat Race, and to insure that Clark would be exhausted he didn't switch him with Macdonald until the end of the practice. No one argued with the way Topolski set the day's races, however. In Chris Penny's estimation, it was "scrupulously fair and understandably tough."

Clark was badly winded when his turn came to switch. His ribs ached, and he was a long way from top condition. But Clark was a veteran of the weeks of almost continuous seat racing which precede the selection of every United States national team, and he could adapt from one crew to another as well as anyone else in the world.

Clark and Macdonald hardly looked at each other as their two shells came together, oars interlocking, in the middle of the Thames. Both men untied their feet from the shoes built into the bulkheads of the shells and stepped across from one boat to the other. Because Clark was taller than Macdonald, they both had to readjust the placement of the shoes in their new boats. Clark took his time with the adjustment, to get more rest. Even so, Macdonald was sure he could win. He had done all the training that Topolski had asked of him, and was in peak form, he told me later. "It was the race of my life," he said. The two boats separated, the race started, and, Macdonald recalls, "suddenly Clark's boat was far ahead."



Both crews had been instructed to row at the same cadence—thirty strokes per minute—to make the races as fair as possible. Normally, the coxswain keeps his crew informed of the cadence, but the coxswain of Clark's new boat didn't have a stroke counter. Macdonald claims that Clark's boat charged off the start, and that its rate was too high. Chris Penny, the stroke oar of Clark's boat, says that he simply matched his cadence with that of the other boat. His crew was well in front, matching Macdonald's boat stroke for stroke, Penny says, when he heard Topolski yell from the launch, "Penny, you're rowing too high! Take it down!"

"I was right on his blades!" Penny told me. "The other boat was soon two strokes higher than mine. At the higher stroke rate, they were catching up fast, but Topolski kept calling for me to lower my cadence. I was damned if I was going to drop to a thirty when the other boat was at thirty-two. I tried to let Dan know that something was wrong. I gave him the finger. Taking one hand off the oar handle to do it cost us a seat or so. In the last minute, we were still in front, but I realized that Macdonald's boat was sprinting. I tried to go with them. We raised our rating to thirty-four strokes per minute, and the first thing I heard from Topolski was 'Penny, take it down.' Jon Fish, the coxswain of the other boat, was reading thirty-seven on his counter. I don't like to accuse anyone of cheating, but I wouldn't argue with anyone who said the seat race was blatantly unfair."

In any event, Clark still won, by a third of a length. Penny says, "If I hadn't flipped off Topolski, and if Macdonald's boat hadn't sprinted, we would have won by a mile. Macdonald was completely cowed after the seat race, and we left thinking, Oh, well, Donald isn't in the Blue Boat."

As the other crew members collected their gear and loaded the shells onto the trailer for the ride back to Oxford, Clark was called into a meeting with Macdonald and Topolski and another coach. Clark had proved himself, the coaches said. He deserved to be in the Blue Boat. But they didn't want him to row on the port side. He would switch back to starboard, replacing Tony Ward, who had sacrificed his seat to Graham Jones, the Australian, the year before. (As it happened, Ward had just won his own seat race, and was on the phone to his parents to say that he had finally made the Blue Boat.)

Topolski may have thought he had found a compromise that would mollify both the Americans and Macdonald. And, in fact, Clark was willing to make the switch back to starboard if his place in the Blue Boat was guaranteed and if the crew would go along with it. But the Britons on the squad were unwilling to let Tony Ward be sacrificed again. At first, their anger focussed on Topolski, but then they began to blame Macdonald for not volunteering to step down. Macdonald—in a moment that he later called "stupid and unguarded"—said to Richard Hull, "I'm president and I'm going to row in the boat. If people start walking out . . ." What he had not counted on was that the crew would refuse to row with him.

Before practice on Monday, Lyons and Hull told Macdonald that they

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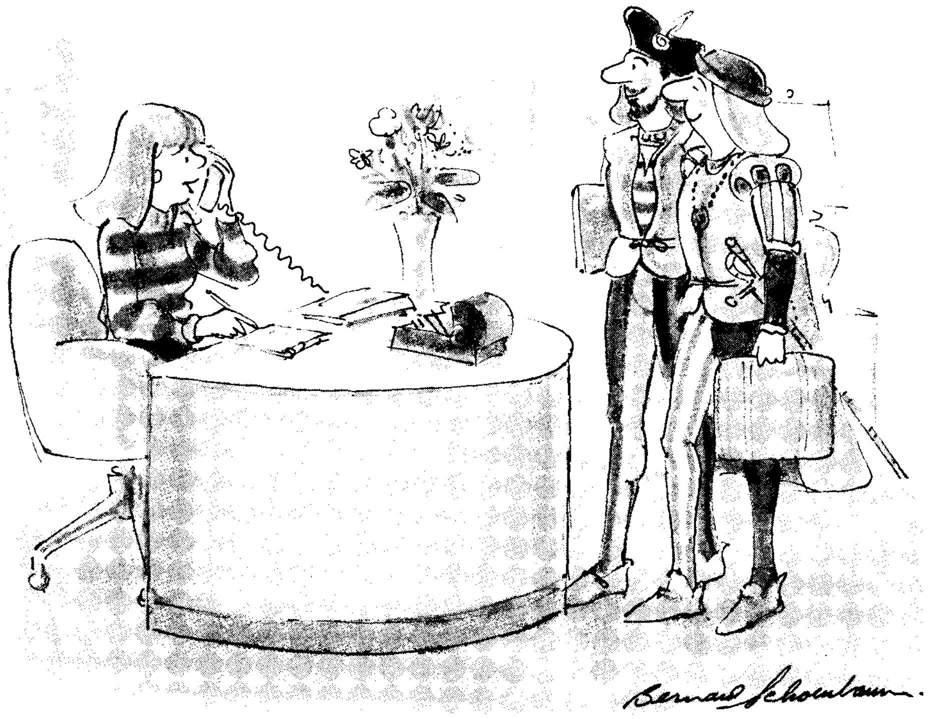


"Two gentlemen from Verona to see you, sir."

• •

needed to talk to him. There was dissension in the crew, they said. Macdonald should either extend the selection process or step down. Macdonald refused to make a decision, but on the way to practice he stopped the crew van at his house, got out of the driver's seat, and tossed the keys to Richard Hull. The crew went on to row without their president, and was, in the words of that fortnight's coach, Mike Spracklen, who was a coach of the British national team, "the fastest Oxford crew I've ever seen." Macdonald called what had happened mutiny, and it seemed to the rest of the crew that he had begun to view himself less as a man who had lost a race than as the sole guardian of Oxford rowing tradition.

When he tossed the keys to Hull, Macdonald wished his crew good luck. Perhaps anticipating just such a development, he had familiarized himself with the constitution of the Oxford University Boat Club, which is about four typewritten pages long. He told me later that he imagined that his crew had done the same, and would realize that the only legal way to challenge his authority was by a vote of no confidence from two-thirds of the college crew captains. The captains were scheduled to meet that Wednesday night—two days away—and Macdonald figured he had that much time to rally support. His first call for help was to Dan Topolski. Macdonald said he had been "frog-marched" from the crew, and, aghast, Topolski replied, "This is not going to happen! If I have to, I'll lose the lot of them."

Sure of Topolski's support, Macdonald then called Ronald Howard, the rowing master of Radley School. Howard had become a hero to the Oxford rowing establishment in 1959, when, as president, he put down the rebellion led by the Yale man Reed Rubin. Howard immediately offered to help. "Every mutiny has resulted in a winning crew," he said. "The people you're left with are worth more than any medallists."

One by one, the other coaches pledged their support to Macdonald. So that the crew would not know he was hatching something, Macdonald asked Mike Spracklen to continue to work with it until Wednesday. The crew members still believed they were fighting about a seat race. They hadn't studied the constitution and didn't care what was in it. If the matter required resolution, they believed, it should take place on the water, with another seat race. On Wednesday evening, Macdonald walked into the captains' meeting and informed those present that there was "a little problem that would be solved by the weekend."

ABOUT forty miles downriver from Oxford, the University of London's crew was rowing under Mark Lees—that university's first professional rowing coach. (Lees, a regular member of the Oxford coaching staff, had been scheduled to take over the Blue Boat after Mike Spracklen.) Meanwhile, Oxford itself was in the midst of negotiating to hire a full-time "coördinator" for college and university rowing. It seemed that the British amateur-coaching tradition was beginning to break down, and members of the Oxford administration must have feared that a successful mutiny would end the club system. The administration might have been more vocal in its protests if the whole affair had not been so embarrassing. The papers wanted to know why there were so many American Olympians on the Oxford crew, and the administration found itself having to defend the integrity and academic achievements of its mutineers.

Thursday afternoon, three days after leaving the crew, Macdonald assembled the rowers at Vincent's, a social club frequented by Oxford athletes. He sat behind a table, near Topolski, and read aloud from a prepared statement. "It was as if he were at a funeral," Chris Huntington recalled. "You could see the strain in his shoulders. He spoke in blurts of one syllable. Donald had obviously spent three days making up his mind, and it had taken all his strength."

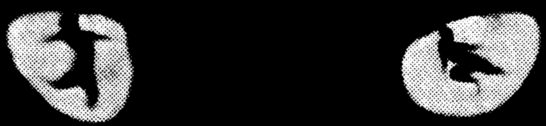
Macdonald summarized his constitutional powers and said that the coaches had selected a crew. "I read the names of the fastest crew I could work with without trouble," he told me later. "That list did not include Chris Clark, Jon Fish, or Dan Lyons. The rest of the crew had to call me by midnight and tell me whether or not they were prepared to row. I left as soon as I finished reading. At the door, Topolski looked back and said, 'You assholes, you've ruined the race.' The crew totally freaked."

No one answered Macdonald's midnight deadline. About nine hours after the meeting, a delegation of rowers from the crew arrived at Macdonald's house. They were angry but also frightened. Their Oxford blues were at stake. Still, they came to plead for the Americans. A deal was proposed. Lyons and Fish could return to practice, but Clark would be left out until a panel of impartial judges could be convened at Henley. All three men had to miss practice on Friday, because Macdonald had just announced the crew to the press and wasn't prepared to change it right away.

On Sunday, the panel of impartial judges that the crew expected to discuss the Clark problem turned out to be a group of coaches. No crew members were invited, and, for additional support, Macdonald brought along two veterans of the 1959 mutiny, Ronald Howard and Richard Fishlock, a member of the Oxford University Boat Club Trust Fund. At the meeting, one of the coaches told me, Macdonald presented an account of what he termed the "completely inconclusive" seat races at Henley. Topolski followed with a list of Clark's offenses throughout the year—enough to hang him as a mutineer several times over. Mike Spracklen protested that Clark was not the cause of the mutiny. The real issue, he said, was dropping Tony Ward and switching Clark to starboard. In the end, however, the only surprise was that the coaches took five hours to reach a unanimous verdict and write a press release. Clark's crime: "Failure to meet the demand of the coaches." He would "not be asked to continue training with the squad."

Before Macdonald went to bed Sunday evening, he told Clark the news. On Monday morning, a delegation from the crew complained that the meeting had been rigged, and Macdonald agreed to an appeal that evening, with the crew present. Nevertheless, Macdonald felt that the battle was over, and he was certain he had won.

AT the head of an Oxford-college committee room is a long table covered in deep-green leather. At six o'clock on Monday evening, Donald Macdonald joined a panel on one side of the table which included Richard Fishlock, Dan Topolski, and Mike Spracklen (who now regretted joining



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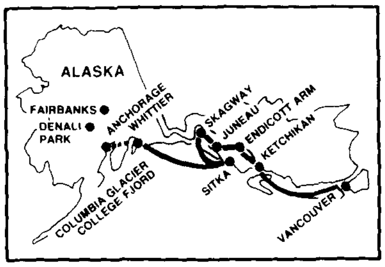

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in the coaches' decision to drop Clark). When Chris Clark saw them, he said later, the Spanish Inquisition came to his mind. "This is not what you expected," he told his teammates at the door. But it was Macdonald's turn for an unpleasant surprise. The panel, from what its members had heard of the Henley episode, expected "vociferous Yanks." Instead, it met the Irishman Gavin Stewart, Macdonald's vice-president, backed by the soft-spoken Chris Penny and Dan Lyons at his poetic best. As Macdonald said later, hearing the crew describe its side of the dispute "put the panel into total disarray—a cavalry retreat with horses rearing."

After an hour or two, Richard Fishlock, the chairman, adjourned the meeting and asked the crew to wait outside. A large, jovial man, Fishlock runs a small advertising firm and spends his free time raising money for Oxford rowing. He winked toward the crew as it walked out. "We're big men here," he said. "The Boat Race is at stake. We have to make some kind of compromise."

When the crew had left, he said, "Well, Donald?"

"Well, what?" said Macdonald.

"The situation is more serious than we thought. The depth of feeling . . ."

"Of course they feel strongly," Macdonald said. "What did they tell you that you hadn't heard before? If Clark was wrong yesterday, why is he right today? Are you now telling me I've got to tell the press we have changed our minds?"

"It's O.K. to change your mind," Fishlock said gently.

"We're sticking by what was decided on Sunday," said Macdonald.

The crew came back in with grins on their faces, sure that Clark would be reinstated. When the meeting was called to order, Fishlock told them, "We sympathize with you, but we can't reverse the position of the board."

Undaunted, Dan Lyons stood up. "I'd like you to listen to something and see in your heart whether what's happened is fair," he said. He caught Topolski's eye and then began to read aloud, " 'No one gets into the crew because he's a good chap or because he went to the right school. He's there because his results demand that he be there; they show him to be one of the eight best men and the rest of the crew know it. And so does he. [Other crews] exclude the temperamentally difficult man in the interests of harmony. Good! That makes them easier to beat.' " Lyons held the book aloft. "It's 'Boat Race: The Oxford Revival,' by Dan Topolski."

Topolski responded in a clear voice, "I know it, I wrote it, I believe it."

Donald Macdonald appeared shaken. Later, he recalled, "There was a barrage of questions. I can't think that fast on my feet. Jon Fish was writing everything I said on his notepad, so he could catch contradictions."

"All we want is the fastest Oxford boat possible," Fish declared. "Do you want the fastest boat?"

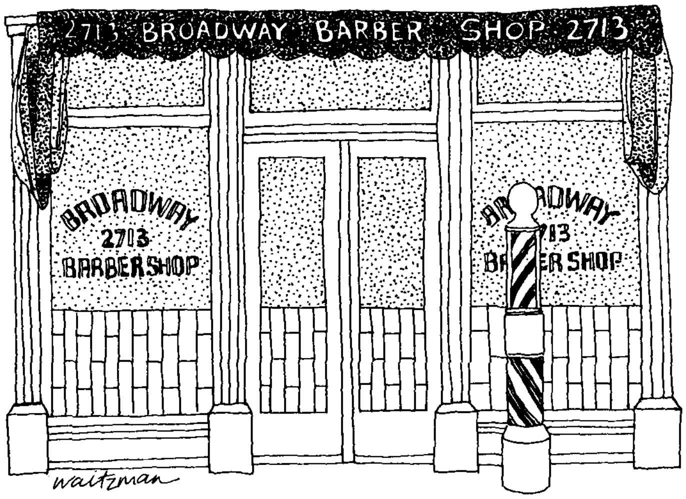
"Of course I do," Macdonald replied. He said later, "The crew had the idea that all they had to do was to box me in—that if they could demonstrate by logic that we were wrong then Clark would be back in the boat."

In the end, the panel did not reverse its decision, but that night Ruth Macdonald remained up long after her husband had fallen asleep. In the morning, she suggested that Donald offer to stand down from the Blue Boat and let Paul Gleeson, from the reserve crew, take his place. The compromise, she thought, would bring the crew back to practice, save Donald's presidency, and still keep Clark out of the boat. Macdonald agreed, and told the crew, who said the proposal didn't address the issues. On Wednesday, his "magnanimous offer" was repeated in the newspapers, and that afternoon the crew called to accept. Macdonald then told them that the offer had had a deadline, and that it had expired the night before.

When the combatants were quoted in the papers, they almost always referred to each other as "nice guys." In private, each camp likened the other to "cornered rats." Both sides were trapped. Macdonald had no crew for the Boat Race, and the crew could not race without him. Cambridge would accept a formal challenge to race only from Oxford's president. The one group not cornered was Isis, the reserve crew. If the reserves backed the rebels, Macdonald would be forced to negotiate, but if they backed Macdonald the reserves might become the Blue Boat. On Wednesday, the day that Macdonald's offer to stand down was printed in the papers, the two Isis coaches persuaded the reserve crew to join Macdonald. "All you see in the history books is the Blue Boat, win or lose," their coaches told them. Isis's decision may not have been noble, but it was effective. "I had a crew, come what might," Macdonald told me later. He issued a final deadline for Sunday night. Anyone who would not pledge allegiance to him by then would not row in the Boat Race.

The rebel crew's last hope was what Macdonald had feared from the beginning: a vote of no confidence from the college captains. The boat-club constitution requires that the president give forty-eight hours' notice before calling a captains' meeting. On Friday afternoon, January 30th, Chris Penny arrived at Macdonald's college with a petition signed by five captains for a meeting on Sunday. Having already received the petition in his college mail that morning, Macdonald was drafting his rejection before Penny arrived. He said he would convene a meeting the following Tuesday only if the crew ended the mutiny by Sunday night.

The rebels saw no choice. In exchange for the promise of a captains' meeting—which, they were sure, would force Macdonald from the presidency—they pledged themselves to Macdonald, and on Monday they came back to row with him. Their first workout together was dispirited—at least until the end, when the coxswain, Jon Fish, called for his rowers to imagine that their feet



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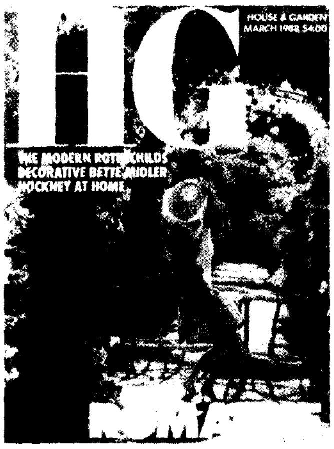

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were pushing against the face of the man they hated most. "Then," said Fish, "the boat jumped out of the water and flew."

ONE of Donald Macdonald's friends is a barrister, who was happy to advise him on the fine points of his rights under the constitution. The constitution was very specific about who could attend a captains' meeting, so most of the crew ended up at the movies that night. The meeting was held at New College, and was conducted by Donald Macdonald and Michael Barry, a don at St. John's College. Gavin Stewart and Chris Clark were on hand to represent the rebels. Macdonald brought along Dan Topolski. The captains had requested a meeting to "discuss the selection of the Blue Boat." A discussion, the captains learned, is not the same as a debate. And since the captains had not specifically requested a vote of no confidence, one was not on the agenda. Macdonald refused to accept motions from the floor, and he said afterward that he was prepared to adjourn the meeting if, despite his precautions, things shifted out of his control.

"By ten-thirty, I could have just closed the meeting," Macdonald recalled. "But it was providential I didn't. The longer the meeting went on, the more it turned in our favor. There was a guy waving in the back. 'Last question,' I said. He came up with a gem: 'We'll lose Topolski if we don't have a vote of confidence!' "

In the end, Donald Macdonald won, by twenty-eight to eleven. Gavin Stewart voted against him, but Macdonald expected that. "I could have fired Stewart before the meeting and cancelled his vote," he said, "but that would have done more harm than good." Macdonald marched outside into the glare of television lights to speak with journalists. The rebellion had been crushed. A few months later, remembering that evening, he smiled and told me, "We shafted them good and proper that night."

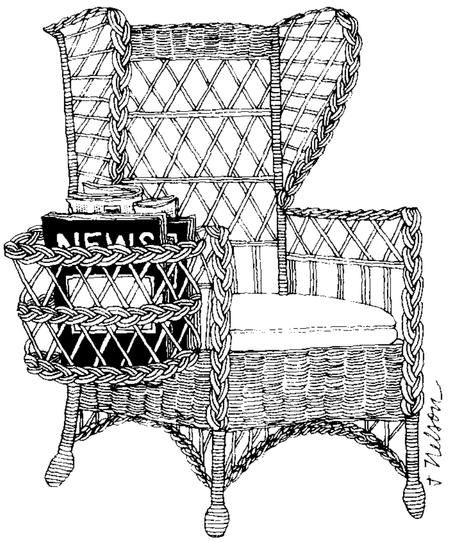
After the vote, Gavin Stewart, Richard Hull, and Tony Ward quit the rebellion. Macdonald was sure that at least two Americans—Penny and Huntington—would also return to the squad, but Penny never came back to practice. Lyons and Huntington turned up the day after the meeting but refused to row. Lyons told me later that "it was the end of a dream." At the time, he said to Macdonald, "We're afflicted by a rare American disease affecting people between six feet four inches and six feet six inches."

Macdonald pressed Huntington. "There will be no more captains' meetings," he said. "The battle is over."

Huntington looked at Macdonald for several moments. He told me later that he thought about what rowing meant to him, and whether the Boat Race was worth a sacrifice of his principles. "I'm sick, Donald," he said, finally. "Sick and disgusted."

OVER the next few weeks, there was a flurry of transatlantic phone calls as old Blues from America and Canada tried to bring the American rowers back into the crew. Reed Rubin, the American rebel of '59, who had become a successful stockbroker, offered to fly from New York to mediate at a luncheon. But it was too late. As a last gasp, the Americans took their story to the Oxford Political Union, and debated there in front of CBS News cameras the question whether "the selection of the Boat Race crews has been mishandled." Chris Penny told the Union, "This is a highly charged situation, and, handled correctly, it could be used as fuel for the boat. But now that fuel is spilling everywhere, and everyone's getting burned. Macdonald is not a rocket scientist." The rebel crew won the debate, a hundred and eleven to nine. The *Cherwell*, Oxford's student newspaper, called for Macdonald's resignation.

"When the Americans left, we dragged our feet, moped around, just filtered out on the water," Richard Hull recalls. "People didn't want to do the weights. Hell, nobody did the weights. An awful lot of energy was taken up with the past. There was a lot of sniping and bitching about Macdonald behind his back."



The crew practiced against club crews and college crews, and lost more often than not. What made their defeats worse was their own sense that they were giving up. Newspaper correspondents who had earlier called for the hanging of the mutineers now mourned "the unseemly loss of a great crew."

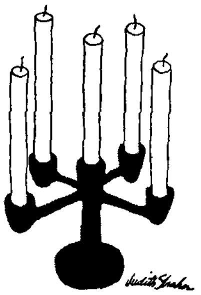
Macdonald did not attempt to rally the rowers but instead handed himself and the crew over to Topolski. Two weeks before the Boat Race, Topolski, as he had done in past years, moved the crew into a house near Putney. This was the moment he was famous for: the fortnight when all his experience and cunning gave an edge to his crews.

Gavin Stewart had come back to the squad because of family pressure, but the decision did not sit well with him. His uncertainty was tearing the crew apart. Topolski couldn't take Stewart out of the boat—the crew needed his strength—so the weekend before the race Topolski and the crew disappeared from the Tideway, and, out of sight of the press, Topolski reshuffled the boat. When they returned to the Tideway, Gavin Stewart had been moved from No. 6 to stroke. His uncertainty vanished.

Donald Macdonald was moved up from the No. 4 seat to the No. 6 seat —"the engine room," where Chris Clark had been the previous year. That seemed an odd decision: Macdonald had always rowed without any spark or flair. He sat erect, with his eyes straight ahead, pulling more mechanically than artfully. On the other hand, the men behind him knew he did not back down.

Topolski also replaced the crew's American-made carbon-fibre oars with heavier wooden blades. He thought that the heavier blades would give the crew more stability in rough water. Hull told me, "When we went out with new blades, new rigging, and new lineup, we flew. Dan Topolski started jumping up and down in the launch, and shouted, 'My God, we're going to show them!' It was contagious."

Hull did not mention another change made in the Oxford boat. Months before, Chris Huntington had told Macdonald about Riblets—a thin, transparent tape, made by the 3M Company, that Dennis Conner had used on the hull of his America's Cup yacht. Riblets is etched with slits, smaller than the grooves on a phonograph record, and they improve the flow of water against the hull, reducing its drag. The December, 1986, *Scientific American* estimated that Riblets provides a four-boat-length advantage over the standard two-thousand-metre race—the equivalent of a fourteen-boat-length advantage on the Tideway. Riblets has been outlawed by the Fédération Internationale des Sociétés d'Aviron, but FISA rules do not apply to the Boat Race, and Oxford now secretly installed the tape. I didn't understand why at the time, but I couldn't help noticing that the people in charge of the Oxford shell became testy when I got too close to it. Despite all Topolski's magic, though, on Race Day the local bookmakers favored Cambridge by odds of three to one.



The Boat Race was scheduled for twelve-fifteen on the afternoon of March 28, 1987. By ten o'clock that morning, a strong breeze was building toward a gale. Old Blues who gathered early to claim their places on the university launches were ebullient. Big waves promised a "grand slugfest," Dick Fishlock said. Sullen souvenir sellers huddled in their booths. On such a day, most spectators would stay home and watch the race on television.

The BBC had allocated fifteen cameras for the race: one was in a helicopter; two were in launches; and the rest were stationary, mounted like big guns on parapets over the river. One BBC cameraman, near the finish line, was braced against the wind, trying to fix a broken radio link to the command center, at Putney. "I just hope someone wins," he said to me. "If both boats sink, I'll have to come back tomorrow."

At ten-thirty, an hour and forty-five minutes before the race, the flags above the row of boathouses on Putney Embankment pointed straight across the river. A shift of only a few degrees would put the wind directly against the current—would make it a northwesterly, "sinking wind." It was a day that would have postponed Olympic rowing or the Harvard-Yale boat race. It was the day that Oxford had prayed for.

By eleven o'clock, spray from the river was supplemented by sheets of rain. Dan Topolski was fiddling with the coxswain's microphone system. The Oxford crew was upstairs in the National Westminster Bank boathouse. Gavin Stewart was visible through a window, looking out over the storm, smiling. Donald Macdonald and Cambridge's president, Steven Peel, stood in front of the BBC cameras for the coin toss. Oxford won, giving Macdonald the choice of which side of the river to start on—Middlesex or Surrey. Surrey puts the crew on the outside of the first bend, a disadvantage of about a quarter of a boat length, but Surrey has the inside of the second bend, a long horseshoe bend to Hammersmith Bridge—worth three-quarters of a length. Almost invariably, the winner of the coin toss chooses Surrey, and braves the outside of the first bend to have the advantage of the second. If the wind is from the northwest, however, Surrey can become unrowable. Then the better course is Middlesex, which is in the shelter of Fulham Wall.

At the time of the toss, the wind was still from the west, but Macdonald chose Middlesex anyway. The BBC asked why. "Because my coach told me to," Macdonald replied. Off camera, Topolski shrugged. "Instinct," he said.

Fifteen minutes before the race, hailstones were bouncing off the crews as they warmed up on the racecourse. Lightning hit a BBC relay station near the starting line, shaking up an engineer. Moments later, the umpire's launch broke down, and the umpire was forced to ride in the Oxford launch. When Oxford pulled up to the stakeboat, the wind and tide dragged both boats away from the line.

Andy Lobbenberg, who was now Oxford's coxswain, recalls, "We took on some water as we waited at the stakeboat. We mopped up the water with kit [sweat clothes] and handed it to the guy in the stakeboat. Then we ran out of kit." The start was now fifteen minutes late. As they waited, the wind shifted, and Andy Lobbenberg realized that they would be heading into a northwesterly. He looked at the breaking waves that now outlined the stream of current, and called for advice from the No. 7 man, Tom Cadoux-Hudson, who had learned to row on the Tideway. "Go for the wall," Cadoux-Hudson said. Still undecided, Lobbenberg turned around toward Topolski, and, as he recalled later, saw him "jumping up

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and down in the launch, waving like a lunatic toward Fulham Wall." Lobbenberg cranked the rudder over. From the BBC's helicopter the view of the start was extremely odd: the Cambridge boat pointed up the course, Oxford pointed toward the riverbank. In the early part of the race, the Cambridge coxswain had a choice. He could turn away from Oxford and head for the fairly calm water near the Surrey bank, he could head straight into the waves, or he could follow Oxford toward Fulham Wall. Any one of these decisions might have worked. Instead, Cambridge first went straight, and then, after about thirty strokes, turned to follow Oxford. When Lobbenberg saw that Cambridge was going straight, he said, "Those silly buggers are staying out there in the waves!" And then, when Cambridge crossed over, Lobbenberg knew he had them.

Indecision may have cost Cambridge half a boat length, but that was only the beginning. Once Cambridge had entered Oxford's side of the river, Lobbenberg started to push them back. He brought Oxford to the very edge of the sheltered water off the Fulham Wall, forcing Cambridge once again into the waves. In the weeks before the race, the Oxford crew had been written off by everyone—including themselves. Now, with half a length advantage, they could see the Cambridge crew flailing in the bad water and falling slowly behind. With a chance of victory after all the agony of the year, the Oxford crew united as never before.

One mile into the race, Oxford pulled directly in front of Cambridge, leaving them to row in oar wash. At Hammersmith Bridge, Oxford was two lengths up. "No crew has ever come back to win from clear water behind at Hammersmith," Richard Hull told himself as he pulled on his oar. "My God, we're going to win!" Then he thought, Shut up! Later, he said, "It was nerve-racking. Exhilarating! We were on a razor's edge. In the last five hundred metres, the whole boat lifted."

At the end of the race, Cambridge was so far behind that it looked, in the words of Walter Ellis, of the *Daily Telegraph*, "as though they might come third."

"And to think Cambridge wanted to race our fast crew," Dick Fishlock remarked to me.

"Well, you must admit this is a funny old race," Dan Topolski said as

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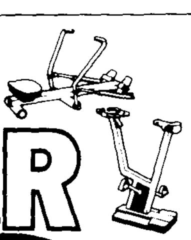

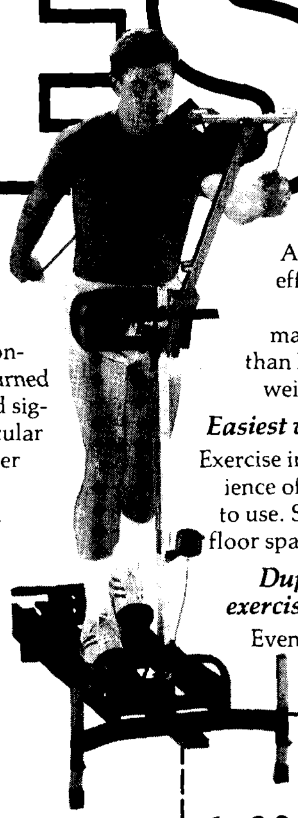

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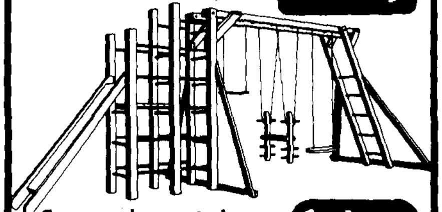

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we rode back to Putney on board the Oxford launch. "I wish the Americans had been here. But if they had been here we might not have had the flexibility to get in under the wall and *race the way it had to be raced.*"

Donald Macdonald said of the moment of winning, "Standing in the boat, clenched teeth, clenched fists . . . A whole year I had to be guarded. I raised both fists."

THE day after the Boat Race, the 1987 Oxford Blues gathered their belongings from the house near Putney. It was a sunny, peaceful day. After the race, they had joked about getting so drunk at the Blues' dinner that night that they wouldn't even wake up the next day, but, as it turned out, half of them didn't go to the dinner, and those who did were subdued in their celebration.

"This crew probably won't have any reunions," said Richard Hull. "Certain members will remain very good friends, but we're much more likely to have reunions with the Americans."

Donald Macdonald was making arrangements for his children to stay with their grandparents, so that he and Ruth could fly with the crew to America, for a series of exhibition races. "When you row on a crew, you expect those guys to be your friends for life," he said. "If Huntington and Penny had rowed in the race, it would have bothered them for six months. Not rowing will eat at them for the rest of their lives. They would sleep easier for having done the slightly dishonorable thing. It irks me that, despite all this, Gavin can hardly shake my hand. And I'm left with a slight disappointment. It was an individual victory, not a crew victory—Gavin's victory as stroke, *mine* as captain, and down the line. But we can't have everything."

Two days after the race, I visited Macdonald at his house. Victory allowed him, for the first time, to speak freely of the events, and so we sat for several hours in his living room, sharing some chicken stew that Ruth had prepared for him, as he recounted to me, step by step, how he had kept himself in the Blue Boat and had gone on to win the race. For the first time since I'd met him, his smile did not seem forced. When I got up to leave, he showed me, with apparent pride, the gold medal he had won in the race. He then pointed with mock ruefulness to an eighteen-inch stack of newspa-

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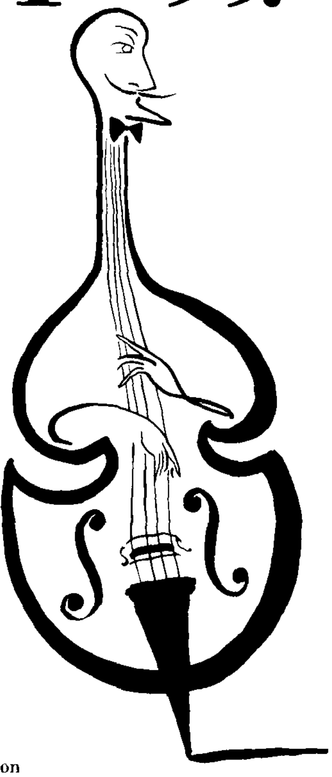

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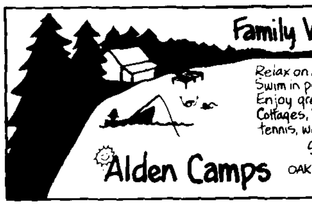

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pers that he planned to clip and to preserve in his scrapbook.

A few days later, Oxford's crew went on to compete in Georgia and in Southern California, where it was beaten by the junior varsities of several second-tier American rowing colleges. When the Blues returned for Oxford's summer term, Tom Cadoux-Hudson, who was backed by Macdonald and Topolski, was expected to become the new president, but the losses in the States had taken some of the lustre off the Boat Race victory. A few days before the election, Lyons and Fish began an aggressive campaign for their own candidate: Chris Penny—the only man, they argued, who could once again make Oxford rowing competitive with the best in the world. Nevertheless, Macdonald had so much confidence in Cadoux-Hudson that he allowed a secret ballot—something not required by the constitution—and no one was more surprised than Macdonald when he read aloud the results: the new president of the Oxford University Boat Club was Christopher Penny. In the weeks that followed, Penny invited Mike Spracklen to become head coach, and Jon Fish, the coxswain, became executive coach and began a "freshers" program for novice rowers. Penny also proposed a constitutional amendment to limit the power of the president, and Oxford hired its full-time rowing coördinator. The Oxford program is not very different now from an American university program, and Penny has great confidence that on April 2, 1988, his Blue Boat will be able to race like his old Princeton crew—"to hang a length down for the first part of the race, pull even, and then, on that rush of adrenaline, move through, and win."

A few weeks ago, I phoned Penny and asked how many Americans would row in that Blue Boat. He paused to "count down" the crew from stroke to bow. "Two, I think," he said. "No, three."

—STEPHEN KIESLING

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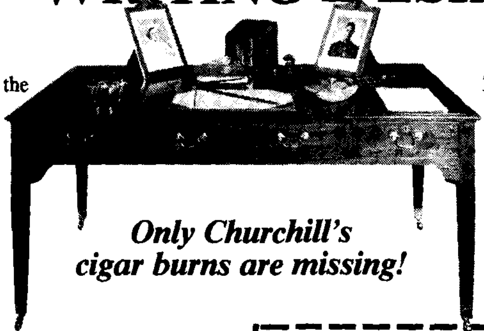

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MUSICAL EVENTS

Pardoning Embrace

NEWARK, NEW JERSEY, is an exotic city. Last month, with some friends, I made an excursion there to see Mascagni's "Iris" presented by the New Jersey State Opera. A wrong turning took us through street after street of Portuguese shops and restaurants; in Portuguese we learned the way to Broad Street, where Symphony Hall stands. Inside the hall, much Italian was being spoken. "Iris" was performed with Italian directness and received with Italian warmth.

It's a rum opera: a symboliste drama, by intention closer to the as yet unwritten "Pelléas" ("Iris" appeared in 1898, "Pelléas" in 1902) than to the verismo of Mascagni's "Cavalleria Rusticana" (1890). Luigi Illica's high-flown libretto is D'Annunzian, filled with italic pages of poetic apostrophe for the reader. Act III, set in a Tokyo open sewer, begins:

> *O lovely Genius of Nippon, lovely and ancient Genius of poesy, of legends, of fearful dramas, grotesque comedies, and strains sweetest to lovers which animate the evening silences—lovely and ancient Genius of flowers and of painters, hast thou no gaiety of lively colors, no silvery glows of moonlight or stretches of green meadows sloping down blue mountains reflected in limpid lakes, no triumphs of the sky and flocks of migrant birds, or silver seas and swift awabi fleets, to surround Iris in her dying moments?*

The lovely Genius of Nippon hath none of these—at any rate to start with. The "bizarre human will-o'-the-wisps" who sing the first words of the act prove to be scavengers, picking over the refuse, stripping an apparently dead Iris of her jewels and her robe, but fleeing in terror when she stirs. Three Egoisms that have brought her to this pass appear and sing, assuming forms that resemble Osaka, the nobleman who sought to seduce her; Kyoto, the procurer who planned her abduction; and her possessive blind father. But then the Sun rises and sings to her in a glowing chorus. All the flowers of the earth blossom around her and enfold her in their embrace:

> *The mousmé's soul has become flower, light, harmony! O Death, Lady of Mystery, how great Thou art in Thy mercy, Thou who placest so many seas and eternal skies between mortals and their griefs!*

In Act I, Iris is lured from her father's side by a puppet show in which Osaka sings the role of Jor, the Son of the Sun. "Mysterious power of fantasy and melody. The voice of the feigned Jor rises high as the Sun. . . . And Iris, the gentle, the good Iris believes in this feigned sweetness." She ventures forward and is seized. Act II is set in Kyoto's pleasure house. When Iris learns that the glamorous figure seeking to embrace her is not Jor but the human Osaka, she asks to be sent home. Osaka tries in vain to arouse her. Suddenly bored by her childishness, he abandons her to Kyoto, who gives her a doll, dresses her in finery, and sets her up in his window. Her father arrives, curses her, and flings filth in her face. She leaps into the sewer deep below.

The tale is wrapped in elaborate Art Nouveau imagery. The sung lines are as precious in diction as the apostrophes and the stage directions. Distinctions between puppets, mortals, and supernatural forces are deliberately blurred. Mascagni sought a musical idiom to match, far from the red-blooded directness of "Cavalleria Rusticana." Sometimes his score is sinuous and wispy, sometimes—as in the Sun choruses—bombastic. He strives ever for outré effects. There are quaint instrumental devices borrowed from Meyerbeer. The climax of the tenor aria "Apri la tua finestra" is the "false" cadence of the Flower Song in "Carmen," and the climax of the principal soprano aria, "Un dì (ero piccina)," is lifted from "L'altra notte," in Boito's "Mefistofele." Sometimes the progressions are so farfetched as to seem incompetent, ungrammatical. (In one episode, discordance is used charmingly: Iris, waking in Kyoto's rich room and believing herself in Paradise, finds a samisen, and, since

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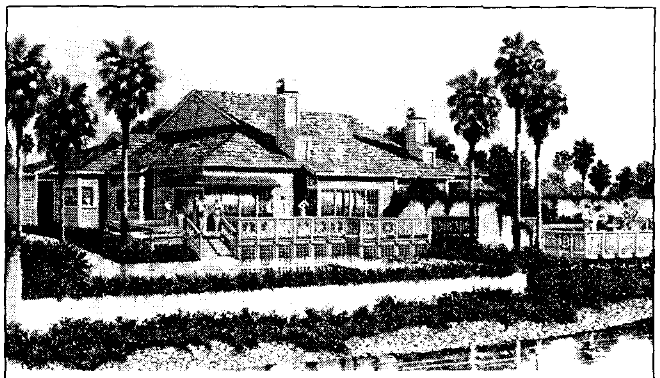

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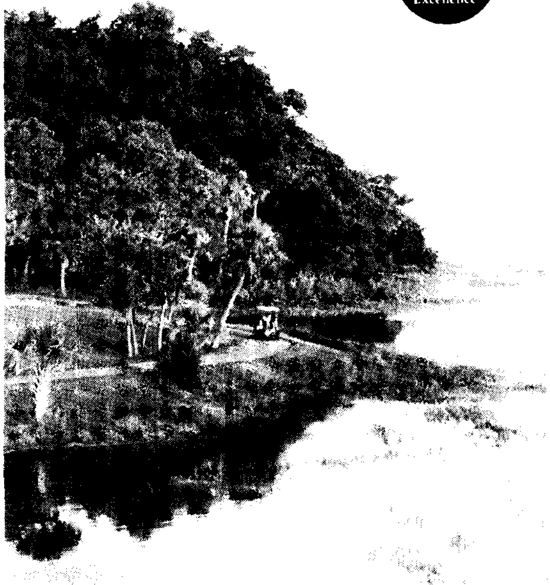

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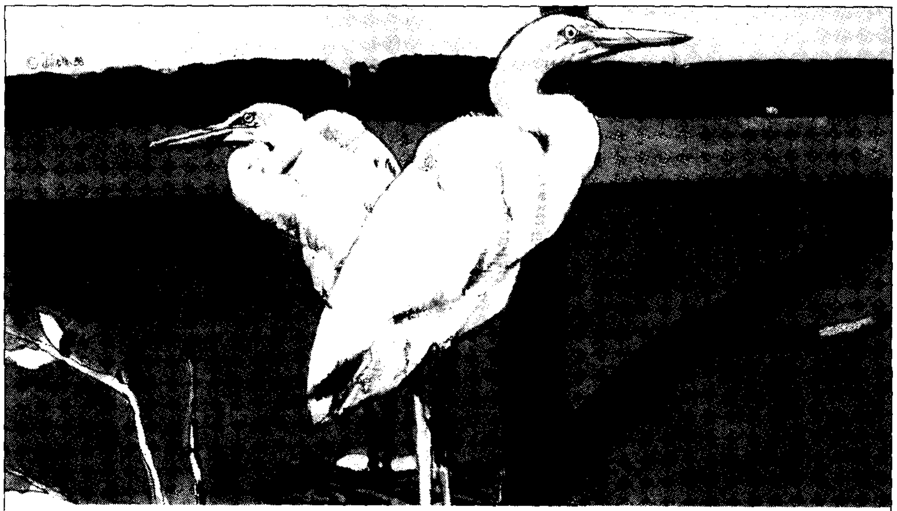

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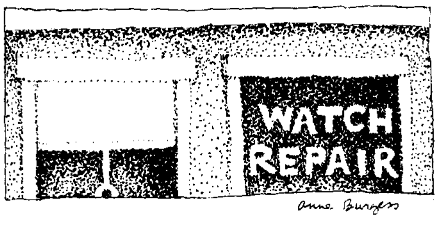
Toscanini admired the work, and conducted it at La Scala and the Met. (It was introduced at the Met in 1902, by a touring company conducted by Mascagni; the regular company did it in 1907, with Emma Eames and Caruso; Toscanini revived it in 1915, with Lucrezia Bori; the last performances there were in 1931, with Elisabeth Rethberg and Gigli.) Eugenio Montale told of finding himself at an “Iris” performance beside a prominent musicologist, who whispered, “If it ever became known that I enjoy this opera, I would be disqualified by my colleagues.” I enjoyed the Newark “Iris” and must brave the scorn of those with more austere taste: Mascagni rates not even a passing mention in Joseph Kerman’s “Opera as Drama.” Novelty (I had not seen the opera for over twenty years), an admirable protagonist, a convinced performance, and the incidental pleasure provided by Newark’s handsome, neo-Roman Symphony Hall all played a part. Yet “Iris” has merits—imaginative ambition, touches that transcend mere oddness, a few sustained melodic flights—that have kept it if not steadily at any rate fitfully before the public. Henry Edward Krehbiel, the critic of the *Tribune* for over forty years, saw its faults clearly (“little flow of natural, fervent melody,” “violent, disjointed shifting of keys and splashes of instrumental color”), but he wrote:

> Symbolism . . . can furnish forth moody food for music, and “Sky robes spun out of Iris woof” appear still more radiant to the eye when the ear, too, is enlisted. Grossness and purulence stain the dramatic element in the piece, but when all is over pictures and music have done their work of mitigation, and out of the feculent mire there arises a picture of poetic beauty, a vision of suffering and triumphant innocency which pleads movingly for a pardoning embrace.

In an age of eccentric opera productions, the New Jersey company upholds tradition. “Iris”—given just once—was done in stock scenery from the Milanese firm of Sormani and in costumes hired from the New York firm of Stivanello. Maria Sofia Marasca’s staging was straightforward, unpretentious, and as close to the book as the circumstances of the Newark house allowed. One would grow restive if all operas were staged thus, but an occasional return to the old style is refreshing. It provided a frame for Adriana Maliponte’s remarkable Iris. Miss Maliponte, who made her début in a Milan “Bohème” in 1958 (at the age of fifteen, if the reference books are right), is an experienced, intelligent, and delicate artist at her prime. Her soprano remains true, unstrained, unworn. She gave a stylish, accurate account of the role, in a manner that becomes increasingly rare. Osaka was Allan Glassman. Once a baritone, he now commands a new voice that does not sound like a pushed-up baritone but is a sure, bright, sharply focussed tenor, with which he made much of “Apri la tua finestra.” Mario Bertolino was Kyoto. Jerome Hines was imposing as Iris’s stern father. Puppets by Nicolas Coppola, the director of Brooklyn’s Puppetworks, and dancers from the New Jersey Ballet swelled the show. The opera chorus was swelled by several other New Jersey choruses, stationed in deep side-galleries of the hall, pouring sound in from all sides as the Sun’s choral voice. Alfredo Silipigni was an adept conductor.

THE day before “Iris,” I had been stirred by nobler music, at one of the Beethoven Society’s Saturday-afternoon concerts in Alice Tully Hall. The programs are not “just more Beethoven.” This season, eminent soloists and student orchestras (from the Curtis Institute, Rutgers, and, with attendant chorus, the New England Conservatory) are appearing together. At one concert, five different pianists played each a “favorite sonata.” Beethoven compositions not often heard now in the concert hall—the cantata “Becalmed Sea and Prosperous Voyage,” the “Consecration of the House” chorus, the Choral Fantasy, the “King Stephen” Overture—are on the bill, along with more familiar works. At last month’s concert, the complete incidental music to “Egmont”—with a linking narration, spoken by Efrem Zimbalist, Jr.—was performed, by the Symphony Orchestra of the Curtis Institute, conducted by Otto-Werner Mueller. This was, indeed, stirring. The playing was at once disciplined, eager, and polished.



The orchestra was set out in balanced fashion, with first and second violins divided. A capacity to be surprised by the beauty and skill of Beethoven’s scoring is ever renewed by performances as fresh, honest, and unaffected as this was. Everything fell into place. Mr. Mueller spanned the full, bold range of Beethoven’s dynamics, without unseemly exaggeration. He obtained carefully molded phrasing, and lilting exchanges between one player and the next. The woodwind balances of the overture were exquisite. The emotional colors deployed in the successive dramatic numbers—a thesaurus of expressive sounds drawn from a classical orchestra in different combinations—were perfectly judged. Praise for the full-toned, supple strings, the responsive woodwinds, the well-tuned brasses; especial praise for the first oboe, Jennifer Kuhns, soloist in the third entr’acte. Benita Valente sang Klärchen’s two songs cleanly and purely, investing them with character, but tended to address her book rather than her hearers.

Tully Hall is a better home for Beethoven’s music than Avery Fisher Hall. The concert continued with a deeply enjoyable Second Symphony, its Larghetto sublimely beautiful, and an “Emperor” Concerto in which that fine Beethoven pianist Anton Kuerti held his listeners rapt on each familiar phrase.

IN this city, pianists from the most famous to tyros pass in a constant parade. No one can keep up with them all. Two of the piano recitals that I did hear this season proved particularly rewarding.

The grand prize of the American Music Scholarship Association International Piano Competition, held annually in Cincinnati, is a Tully Hall appearance. Because the 1986 winner, Roy Kogan, was ill, the silver medallist, Bruce Brubaker, took over his recital, last month, and played a shapely and satisfying program—Schoenberg and Roger Sessions, framed by Haydn and Schumann. The Schoenberg was the two Piano Pieces that make up Opus 33—Schoenberg at his freest, and, in the second piece, even jazzy. The Sessions was the Second Sonata (1946), a work too seldom heard. It unites the bravura pianistic effectiveness of Prokofiev’s sonatas with richer musical content; it poses challenges both technical and emotional. Mr. Brubaker gave a splendid performance. He was dashing yet disciplined in the Allegro con fuoco. The long, lapped lines of the slow movement and the Chopinesque filigree melody that forms its middle section were lyrically played. The fierce touches in the finale, its sudden Hungarian-rhapsody moments, and the soft, picturesque touches (one episode, Sessions said, was suggested by a foghorn sounding through the mist across San Francisco Bay) were all vividly realized. Mr. Brubaker united energy of thought with an ample, effortless technical control of large, capable hands. Under the wrong fingers, Sessions' piano music can seem labored. Played like this, its far-flung textures become lucid and exciting, and its exuberant inventions shine and sing.

Mr. Brubaker won his listeners' confidence from the start, with a keen, poised account of Haydn's last C-major sonata—never mechanical but responsive to its quirks, jests, and sudden, surprising changes of direction. His Schumann—the Opus 12 Fantasiestücke—was romantic, emotionally conceived, formally coherent, and excellently sounded.

Prokofiev's dry, clattery Seventh Sonata—exhilarating to play, perhaps, but a trial to hear—was the only unpleasing part of the recital given early this season by the twenty-year-old Finnish pianist Olli Mustonen, at the Ninety-second Street Y. His program began with the first five Preludes and Fugues from Book II of the Well-Tempered Clavier, rendered in rich, beautiful colors that reflected centuries of keyboard writing, from Bach, through Schumann and Chopin, to Ravel. Each number was re-created for the modern Steinway: some were clean and clear, others "impressionistic;" some fugue subjects were delivered with detached utterance, others in smooth cantabile. All was poetic, controlled, and musically convincing. Mr. Mustonen's Schumann—"Kreisleriana"—was, for the most part pleasantly, impetuous and was very well played. Two of Shostakovich's Preludes and Fugues suggested Bach tales told in a more modern language—which is what they are. Mr. Mustonen also played a composition of his own, Two Meditations—each the working of a high right-hand figure above modal harmonies (influenced by Russian Orthodox music, the composer said in a program note). Though slight, the pieces furthered the impression of a reflective, inventive, and instinctively eloquent musician. —ANDREW PORTER

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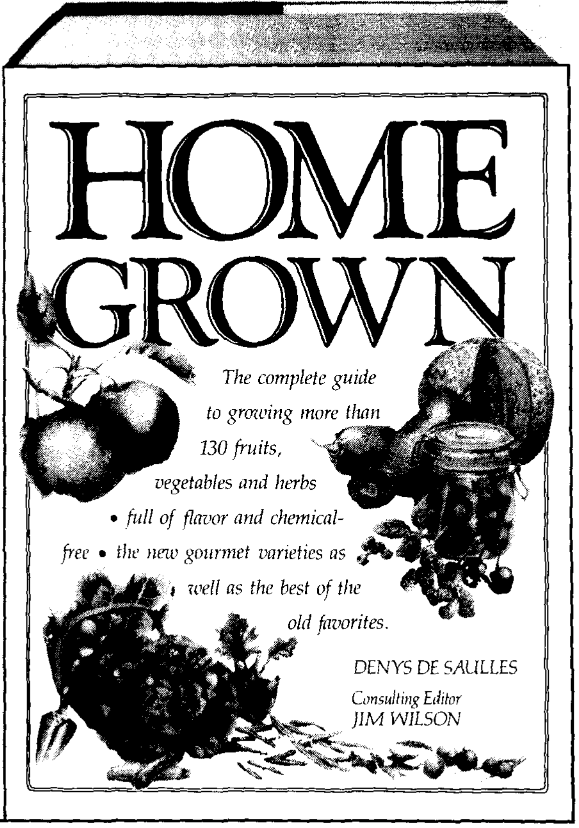
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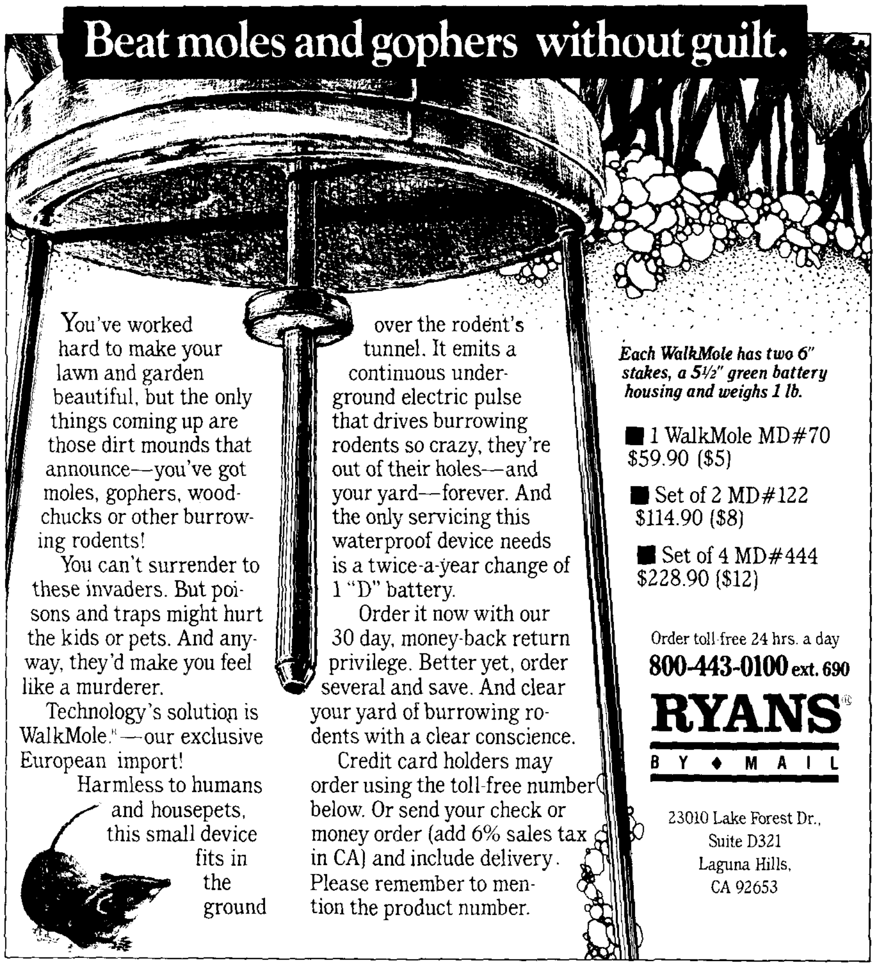
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ALBANIANS are known for their ferocity, isolation, and ultra-Communism, and not for their modern literature; yet Ismail Kadare, born in 1936, has a considerable European reputation, and the first of his works to be published here, "Chronicle in Stone" (translated from the Albanian anonymously; New Amsterdam Books/The Meredith Press; $17.95), is no mere curiosity but a thoroughly enchanting novel—sophisticated and accomplished in its poetic prose and narrative deftness, yet drawing resonance from its roots in one of Europe's most primitive societies. Kadare has been likened to Gabriel García Márquez, and both writers tell of towns still shimmering with magic and dominated by clannishness; Kadare's nameless mountain city, no doubt based upon his own native Gjirokastër, seems less whimsical than García Márquez's Macondo, less willfully twisted into surreality.

Kadare's is a city made entirely of stone, "from the streets and fountains to the roofs of the sprawling age-old houses covered with grey slates like gigantic scales," and so steep that "the top of one house might graze the foundation of another" and a drunk falling in the street winds up on the roof of a house. Though the narrative takes place during the Second World War, the city harbors timeless customs; brides' faces are decorated with "star-like dots, cypress branches, and signs of the zodiac, all floating in the white mystery of powder," and outbreaks of magic cause people to lock up their hair clippings and fireplace ashes. The erection of a statue in the town square had seemed to the natives an alarming novelty: "A metal man? Was such a creation really necessary? Might it not cause trouble? At night, when everyone was sleeping as God had ordained, the statue would be out there standing erect. Day and night, summer and winter, it would stand. . . . To avoid trouble there was no unveiling ceremony. People stood and stared in wonder at the bronze warrior, hand on his pistol, who gazed severely down into the square as if asking, 'Why didn't you want me?' That night someone threw a blanket over the bronze man's shoulders. From then on, the city's heart went out to its statue." When a Greek soldier shoots the statue in the thigh, people "had the feeling they were limping. Others actually were limping."

The prevalent animism is doubly intense in the sensibility of the unnamed child at the center of the novel. He anthropomorphizes the raindrops talking in the gutter, and the cistern beneath the house which they flow into: "I liked the cistern a lot and often leaned over its rim and had long talks with it. It had always been ready to answer me in its deep, cavernous voice." In his mind the city is a stone creature clinging to its mountain, the streets creep and plunge and crash into one another ("a collision from which both streets emerged crooked"), and the warplanes that use the nearby airstrip acquire vivid personalities. A child's self-centered, metaphoric way of seeing generates a constant poetry:

> The little cloud in the sky lurched ahead drunkenly. It had turned long and skinny now. Life in the sky must have been pretty boring in the summer. Not much happened there. The little cloud crossing the sky the way a man crosses a deserted square in the noonday heat melted away before reaching the north. I had noticed that clouds died very fast. Then their remains drifted in the sky for a long time. It was easy to tell the dead clouds from the live ones.

The voice of innocence and gusts of gossip relay the tale, though the chapters are interlarded with fragments of newspaper, proclamation, and historical chronicle. The Italians occupy the city, bringing with them nuns, a brothel, and an airfield; the British bomb the city; the Greeks momentarily occupy it; the Italians return and retreat again; Albanian partisans of various political stripes descend from the hills; and, finally, the Germans occupy the city. Most of its inhabitants flee ahead of the yellow-haired invader, and then slowly return: "Again the tender flesh of life was filling the carapace of stone." With the German occupation, the chronicle ends, as if its marvellous tone of childish fable could no longer be supported by memory. An adult voice tells us at the end, "A very long time later I came back to the grey immortal city. My feet timidly trod the spine of its stone-paved streets. . . . Often, striding along wide lighted boulevards in foreign cities, I sometimes stumble in places where no one ever trips. Passers-by turn in surprise, but I always know it's you. Rising up suddenly out of the asphalt and then sinking back in, deep down."

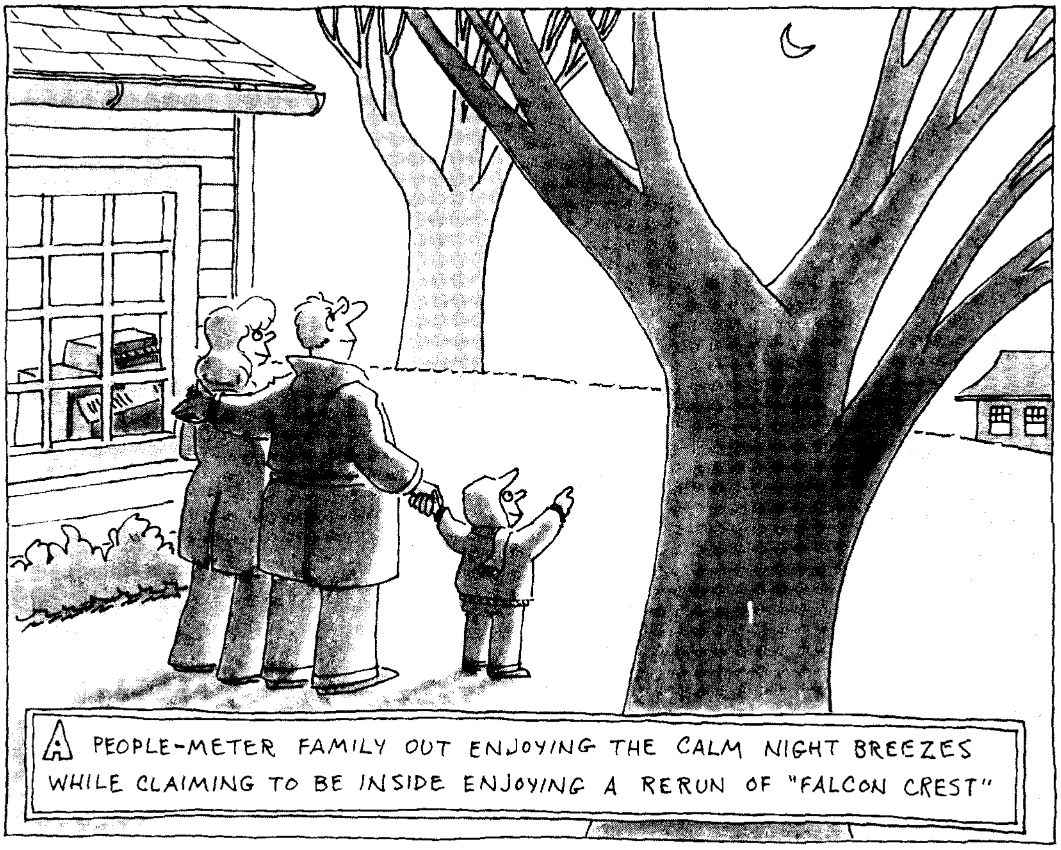
One would like to know where these foreign boulevards were, and how Ismail Kadare was able to produce, under the notoriously repressive and xenophobic Hoxha regime, an art so refined and so free in its feeling. Hoxha is referred to in a late chapter, as a hunted resistance leader and former, once "well-behaved" resident of the city, but without any flattery or obsequious emphasis. The waves of competing authority that move through the city are seen, like spells of weather, in terms of their local effects purely, and the Communist characters participate in the internecine brutality without rising above it. The bits of prose between the first-person chapters reduce history to a non-progressive flutter of old feuds and fresh slogans. The most ominous event is the execution, by the German occupiers, of old Kako Pino, the painter of brides' faces, who is seized by a patrol on her way to one of the weddings that have absurdly, miraculously persisted through all the bombings and invasions. Her picturesque magic is perfunctorily and, one feels, irretrievably erased from the world.

Of the author's status within postwar Albania we know only what the copyright page tells us—that "Chronicle in Stone" ("Kronikë në Gur") was originally published in Tiranë, the forbidding little country's capital, in 1971. Kadare takes us into the bosom of a land where all but a few Westerners are denied entry, and makes little of Albania's Muslim-tinged exoticism—the mosques, the fezzes, the orthographically strange names like Xhexho, Selfixhe, and Vehip Qorri. Rather, his stone city emerges as a persuasive analogue for anyone's childhood—friendly even in its mysteries, precious even in its recollected hardships and barbarities. Nostalgic reminiscence, of course, is one of the safer havens for a creative writer under a totalitarian regime (others are translation, children's stories, and historical fiction). Ismail Kadare, the jacket flap tells us, after first finding fame as a poet, "has mined medieval and modern historical events, legend and reality" in the writing of nine novels. It will be interesting to see, as these novels are translated into English, if they maintain the superb balance and unforced amplitude of this one or slip, under the pressures of a watchful regime, into false naïveté and prudent stylizations.

"BALTASAR AND BLIMUNDA," by José Saramago (translated from the Portuguese by Giovanni Pontiero; Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; $17.95), also comes from a small European country, and partakes of magic realism, that now widely available elixir. Admirable and sweetly melancholy as this ambitious, panoramic novel often is, its magical freedom from realistic constraints, bestowed upon events of the historical rather than the remembered past, waters down our sense of witness and permits the restlessly virtuose author to indulge himself in a great many flourishes of rather baffling intent. Moving between present and past tense, and between the royal court and the plebeian realm of workmen and vagabonds, the novel seems to be telling us something about Portugal, its great inequalities and pious cruelties, with an undercurrent of outrage that an effervescent love story keeps diluting. Its time runs from 1711 to 1739, all during the reign of João V, and its central historical event is the King's agreeing to build, in accordance with a bargain struck with the Franciscans, a convent in the town of Mafra provided the Franciscans' prayers induce his queen, Maria Ana of Austria, to bear him an heir within a year. She does, and the protracted labor of building the extensive convent begins, described by the author in the kind of zealous pro-labor-force detail we might find on a Mexican mural. The transportation of a giant flagstone, thirty-five spans long, fifteen spans wide, and four spans deep (bigger than a breadbox), and weighing thirty-one tons, from the quarry to the site where it will serve as the convent's portico takes six hundred men, four hundred oxen, eight days, and twenty-two pages to move three leagues. The point of all this logistical description seems to be that kings of old made their subjects perform onerous and vainglorious tasks: "The Convent of Mafra was built by Dom João V in fulfillment of a vow he made should God grant him an heir. Here go six hundred men who did not make the Queen pregnant yet pay for that vow by bearing the burden."

Amid this work force is our hero, Baltasar Mateus, nicknamed Sete-Sóis (Seven-Suns), whom we first meet when he is twenty-six years of age—a soldier returning from an engagement with the Spanish cavalry, his left hand having been so shattered by gunfire that it had to be amputated. While idly watching an auto-da-fé in Lisbon, he is accosted by a nineteen-year-old woman, Blimunda, with changeable eyes and a gift, when she has been fasting, of seeing into people, to their tumors and fetuses and essences. She is accompanied by a priest, Bartolomeu Lourenço—a historical figure, who is famous for having invented a flying machine named, since it resembles a giant bird, the Passarola. Blimunda asks Baltasar *his* name, takes him home with her, sleeps with him, and draws a cross on his chest with her virgin's blood. The idyll of their faithful love continues to the day of his death, twenty-eight years later. How it and the additional marvel of Padre Bartolomeu's flying device (it works on the principle of balls of sun-activated amber exercising attraction upon bottled quantities of human wills, which are small dark clouds; these then attract magnets that lift the metal body of the airship) fit into the novel's indictment of corruption and extravagance in all-too-Catholic eighteenth-century Portugal remains a bit mysterious, as do a number of dangling threads in this flamboyant tapestry.

Saramago likes to describe ceremo-



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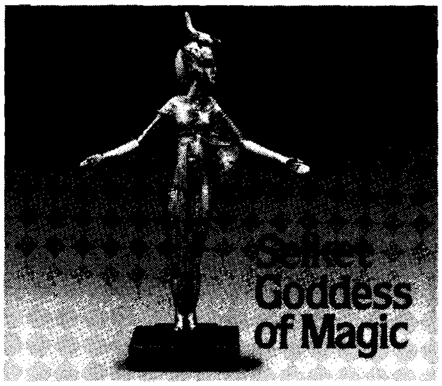

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nies, pageants, and processions. His prose takes on a stiff, brocaded quality:

> The King arrived at half past eight after drinking his morning cup of chocolate, which the Visconde himself served. The royal procession then set out, headed by sixty-four Franciscan friars followed by all the clergy of the region; then came the patriarchal cross, six attendants dressed in red capes, the musicians, the chaplains in their surplices, and representatives from every conceivable order. Then there was a gap to prepare the crowd for what followed, the canons of the chapter wearing their cloaks, some in white linen, others embroidered, and each canon with his personal attendant, chosen from the nobility, walking before him, and his trainbearer behind; then came the Patriarch, wearing sumptuous vestments and a priceless miter encrusted with precious stones from Brazil.

Such pomp crushes, enforcing the reign of the clerisy and the aristocracy. Yet men are equal, in many ways: bedbugs bite the King and "His Majesty's blood tastes no better or worse than that of the other inhabitants of the city, whether blue or otherwise;" the Infanta "pouts and bites her lip" like "any other child her age, whether born in a palace or anywhere else;" death takes royal infants along with others; "Lent, like the rising sun, is a season for everyone;" and all men throw cherry pits on the ground—"It is little things like these that make us realize that all men are equal." The curiously wandering, disembodied authorial voice is now inside the King, thinking with him, and now far outside, delivering an anti-royalist diatribe. Is the author trying to incite the citizens of eighteenth-century Portugal to overthrow the monarchy? If so, he comes a bit late. Perhaps some modern indictment is implied, of Portugal as a national case of arrested development: "Foreigners find us an easy target for jokes . . . our stupidity is clear for all to see, without recourse to Blimunda's visionary powers;" "Never has there been a nation so staunch in its faith yet so disorderly." The glorious past, as conjured up, seems an incubus, an ornate burden, a procession of stately vanity and hypocritical piety.

The great convent at Mafra is not the only construction in the book: Padre Bartolomeu's mechanical bird is assembled and maintained and finally flown, and the common-law marriage of Baltasar and Blimunda is a marvellous contraption of another kind. Built upon that imperious encounter when she asks his name and then signs him with her blood, it endures by the magic of sex and the mutual strangeness of his one-handedness and her clairvoyant, volatile eyes—"their coloring uncertain, gray, green, or blue, according to the outer light or the inner thought. Sometimes they even turn as black as night or a brilliant white, like a splinter of anthracite." They are Adam and Eve before complications set in; the couple have no children, and no privation or parting ever calls them out of the garden of themselves. Even into decaying middle age they kiss with the ardor of young lovers: "Those poor mouths, their bloom gone, with some teeth missing and others broken, but in the end it is love that prevails." Since they undergo no failures but simply persist as an enchanting demonstration of erotic success, and since the work of building the great convent can only plod along, readerly suspense must attach to the Passarola, which is most amusingly evoked, in its spooky mechanics and in its one brief interlude of managed flight. However, it is never deliberately flown again; its inventor, harried by fear of the Inquisition, succumbs to depression and goes to Toledo and dies, and Baltasar and Blimunda, though privy to its operating principles, merely hide it and tend it year after year. The flying machine, like this finespun novel, has nowhere special to go, and stays earthbound, balls of amber and bottled wills and magic realism and all.

There is a powerful negative impulse pulling at José Saramago's airy, wry poetry. His strangest literary habit is to disown thoughts and words that have flown out of his characters: "Who knows why such thoughts should occur to these rustics, for they are all illiterate except João Anes, who has had some education;" "This couple can neither write nor read, yet they can say things that seem most unlikely at such a time and in such a place;" "These are similes invented by someone who is writing on behalf of a soldier who fought in the war. *Baltasar did not invent them.*" And, most confessionally: "Blimunda was clearly incapable of such subtle thoughts; therefore, we are perhaps not inside these people and cannot tell what they are thinking." For all its lovely color and imposing panoply of historical detail, "Baltasar and Blimunda" does somehow lack an inside; King and Queen and priest and lovers and even Domenico Scarlatti are paraded past the reader without his quite knowing what he is supposed to make of their embellished opacity. In this it sharply contrasts with "Chronicle in Stone," whose exotica are rendered, through a child's eyes, intimate and familiar. At one point, Blimunda looks clairvoyantly at the Sacred Host and sees not Christ but "a dark cloud." A dark cloud lurks at the center of this superficially buoyant and festive novel. "Human existence is so miserable," the narrator reflects toward the end, and Queen Maria is shown counselling her daughter the Infanta, "The longer you live the more you will realize that the world is like a great shadow pervading our hearts. That is why the world seems so empty and eventually becomes unbearable." This emptiness translates into a novelistic inertness, a frozen tableau vivant. —JOHN UPDIKE

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

SHOSHONE MIKE, by Frank Bergon (Viking; $17.95). Cowboys and Indians, but no war paint to tell Indians from cowboys, and no white hats to tell good guys from bad. The year is 1911, and Nevada's newspapers are full of a big posse's hunt for a small band of Shoshone Indians suspected of killing a cattleman and three Basque sheepmen. Frank Bergon, whose first novel this is, blurs some crucial scenes—the showdown, for one—with too many two-bit characters; but he is fine when he focusses on three characters who animate his research into the post-Wild West: a cowardly captain in the up-and-coming state police force; a local sheriff who does not share the captain's fear of the "foreign element filling up this country;" and the son of one of the dead sheepmen, who keeps his counsel when he is reminded that there would have been no posse if the cattleman had been a Basque.

CAPTAIN VINEGAR'S COMMISSION, by Philip Glazebrook (Atheneum; $19.95). Mr. Glazebrook's new novel is something of a hybrid—part period piece, part picaresque tale, part doomsday drama. The period is circa 1850, and the setting is Victorian England and then—that proving ground of the Victorian gentleman traveller—the hostile, verminous Middle East. The story has to do with two young Englishmen who become friends at public school and later, as a kind of hoax, work out an impersonation by one of them of a rough-cut adventurer, one Captain Vinegar. There is every kind of satisfaction here, including an eerie metamorphosis of the impersonator into Captain Vinegar himself, and a sardonic style: "a vegetable sort of face gashed like a Hallowe'en pumpkin for eyes and mouth, with a very dim candle of intellect flickering within."

GENERAL

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE GREAT POWERS: ECONOMIC CHANGE AND MILITARY CONFLICT FROM 1500 TO 2000, by Paul Kennedy (Random House; $24.95). A substantial and trustworthy history written to support the author's argument about this country's place in the world today. In Mr. Kennedy's view, an interaction among technology, warfare, economic development, and national culture accounts for the rise and fall of dominant states—empires—and he describes the process as it has occurred over half a millennium of competition among (mostly) European states. He takes us to courts and banks and battlefields and diplomatic conferences—always a scholar exploring the past rather than a zealot hammering home a thesis. His argument is that sooner or later every dominant power has allowed its military commitments to outrun its productive capacity, and that its economic weakness then doomed its military and diplomatic hegemony; he believes that the United States is suffering from just such "imperial overstretch." Our competitors, to be sure, have problems of their own—Mr. Kennedy thinks that the burden of the military on the Soviet economy has been disastrous—but other states' difficulties do not make our own less urgent.

READING AMERICA: ESSAYS ON AMERICAN LITERATURE, by Denis Donoghue (Knopf; $22.95). This book is made up of ten formal essays on significant aspects and significant practitioners of American literature, followed by what the author calls "Brevities"—reviews of books by or about thirteen twentieth-century American poets. Mr. Donoghue is widely acknowledged as one of the most acute critical intelligences at work today, but there is nothing recondite about his writing. In some essays he explores the way

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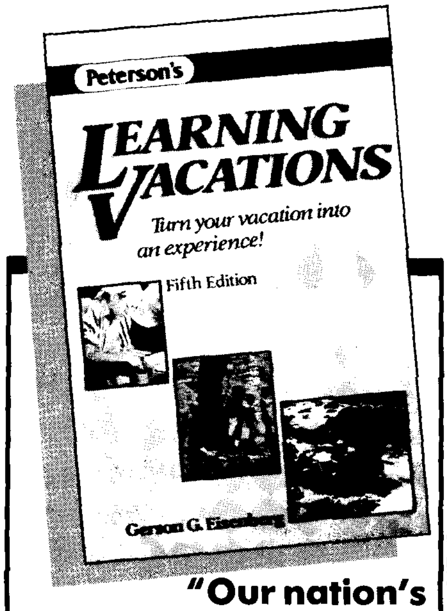

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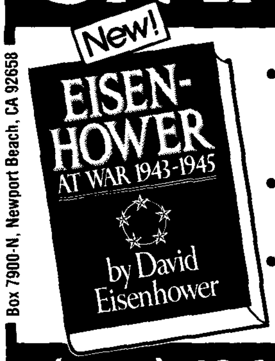

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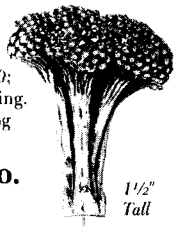

the historical shaping of the United States as a national entity affected the work and the consciousness of our important writers—Emerson, Whitman, Thoreau, Henry James, and others—and how they crafted their peculiarly American experience into literary art. Mr. Donoghue doesn't deal in dogmatic absolutes, and his discussion is wide-ranging and consistently stimulating.

BELFAST DIARY, by John Conroy (Beacon; $18.95). In 1980, the author, an American journalist, set out to write about the effects of the violence in Northern Ireland on the lives of ordinary citizens. He moved into a rooming house in a west Belfast Catholic neighborhood that bordered on a Protestant one (the two were separated by a so-called "peace line"—a wall, actually, consisting of a string of abandoned, sealed-up row houses and twenty-foot-high sections of corrugated iron crowned with barbed wire). Soon thereafter, he came to recognize the impossibility of isolating politics from individual destiny. Centering on the years 1980 and 1981, the book explicates a war that has raged in one form or another since the seventeenth century. Mr. Conroy's account is suffused with an ominous tension, and it culminates in the retelling of events surrounding the deaths of ten hunger strikers in 1981. Though there's no mistaking where the author's sympathies lie—he's clearly in the Catholic camp—he eschews the reductive, and succeeds in mounting a disturbing case against the record of the British, and, in particular, the Thatcher, government.

THE UNARMED PROPHET: SAVONAROLA IN FLORENCE, by Rachel Erlanger (McGraw-Hill; $19.95). Niccolò Machiavelli described the Dominican friar Girolamo Savonarola (1452-98), who was executed by the Florentines over whom he had ruled, as an unarmed prophet, and Ms. Erlanger, in this intelligent life, written for the non-specialist, compares Savonarola with political preachers of our time. When Savonarola was invited to Florence, in 1490, by Lorenzo dei Medici, he immediately started attacking his patron, and in 1494, two years after Lorenzo died, Savonarola's party exiled Lorenzo's inept heir. However, the French invasion of Italy posed greater diplomatic and military problems than Savonarola could solve, and his efforts to win divine favor by moral purification—his famous "bonfire of the vanities"—were practically ineffective. In the end, the mob hysteria he had so shrewdly aroused turned against him.

TRAVELS OF A PHOTOGRAPHER IN CHINA, 1933-1946, by Hedda Morrison (Oxford; $24.95). A sequel to the author's memorable "A Photographer in Old Peking," and every bit as engrossing. Ms. Morrison, a refugee from Nazi Germany, was running a photography studio in Peking in the years when she took the pictures in this book. On her days off, she travelled in the surrounding provinces. Her highly accomplished photographs—of Buddhist temples, shrines, and statues, of Taoist monks, of venders selling goods, of street fortune-tellers and letter writers, of farmers using tools that were familiar in the earliest dynasties—present a society and a way of life that have disappeared in the space of a scant fifty years.

NOTE: "The Yellow Wind," David Grossman's report from the West Bank, has been published by Farrar, Straus & Giroux ($17.95). Much of the contents originally appeared in *The New Yorker*.

MYSTERY AND CRIME

THE JUDAS FACTOR, by Ted Allbeury (Mysterious Press; $15.95). Mr. Allbeury is a writer of espionage novels that often soar above the genre. Tadeusz Charles Anders, English-born but part Polish and part Scot, is a semi-retired S.I.S. agent, loyal to his bosses but very much his own man. He accepts a foolhardy mission to East Berlin and ends up in a Moscow prison. He is exchanged. More tricky business follows. But action is only one element here. Anders stands fully realized as a man. There are equally realized colleagues. There are two perfectly pictured girls. There is an examination of class and behavior and a lesson in live-and-let-live. There is a feeling as one turns the last page of time well spent.

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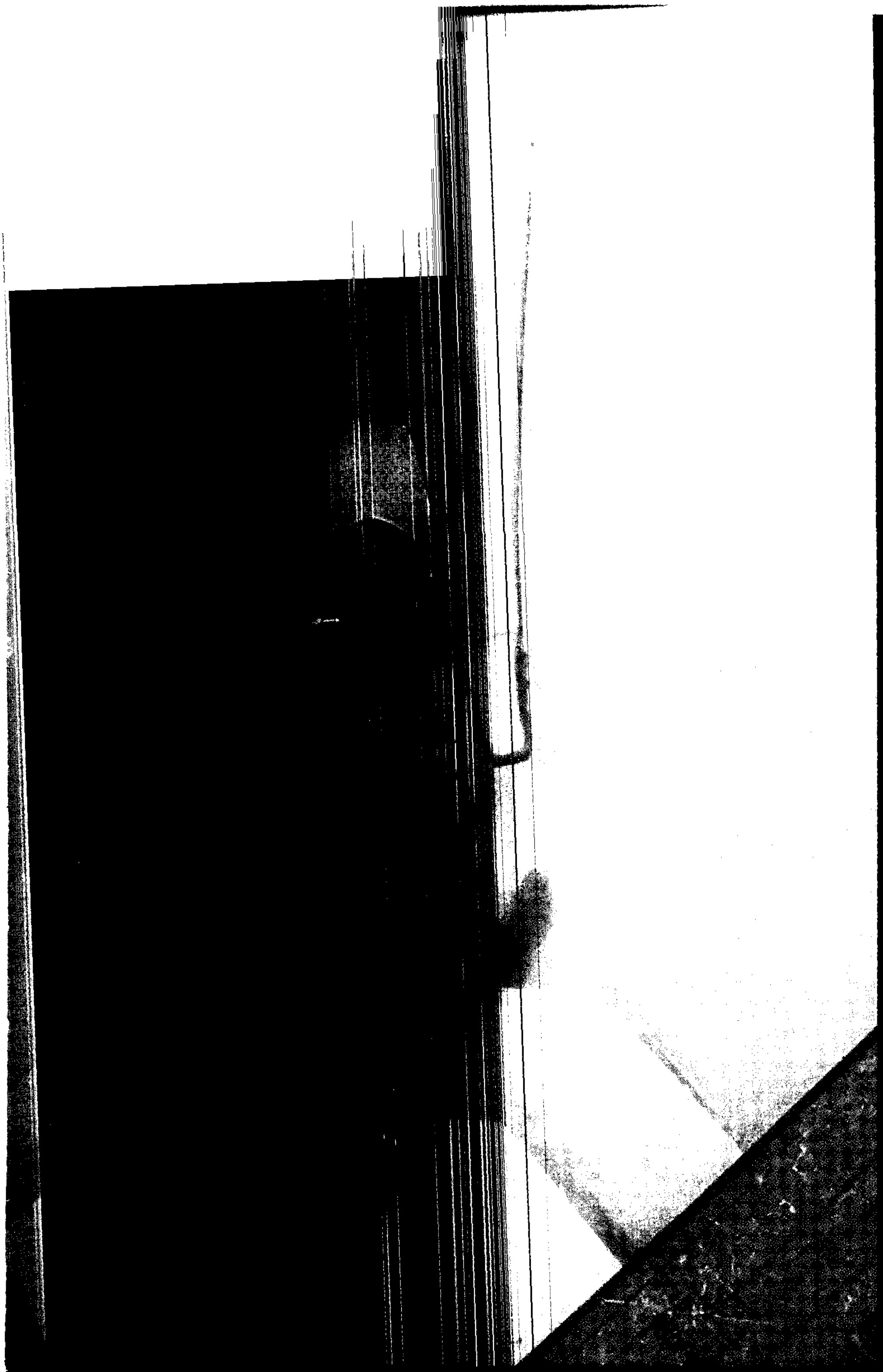

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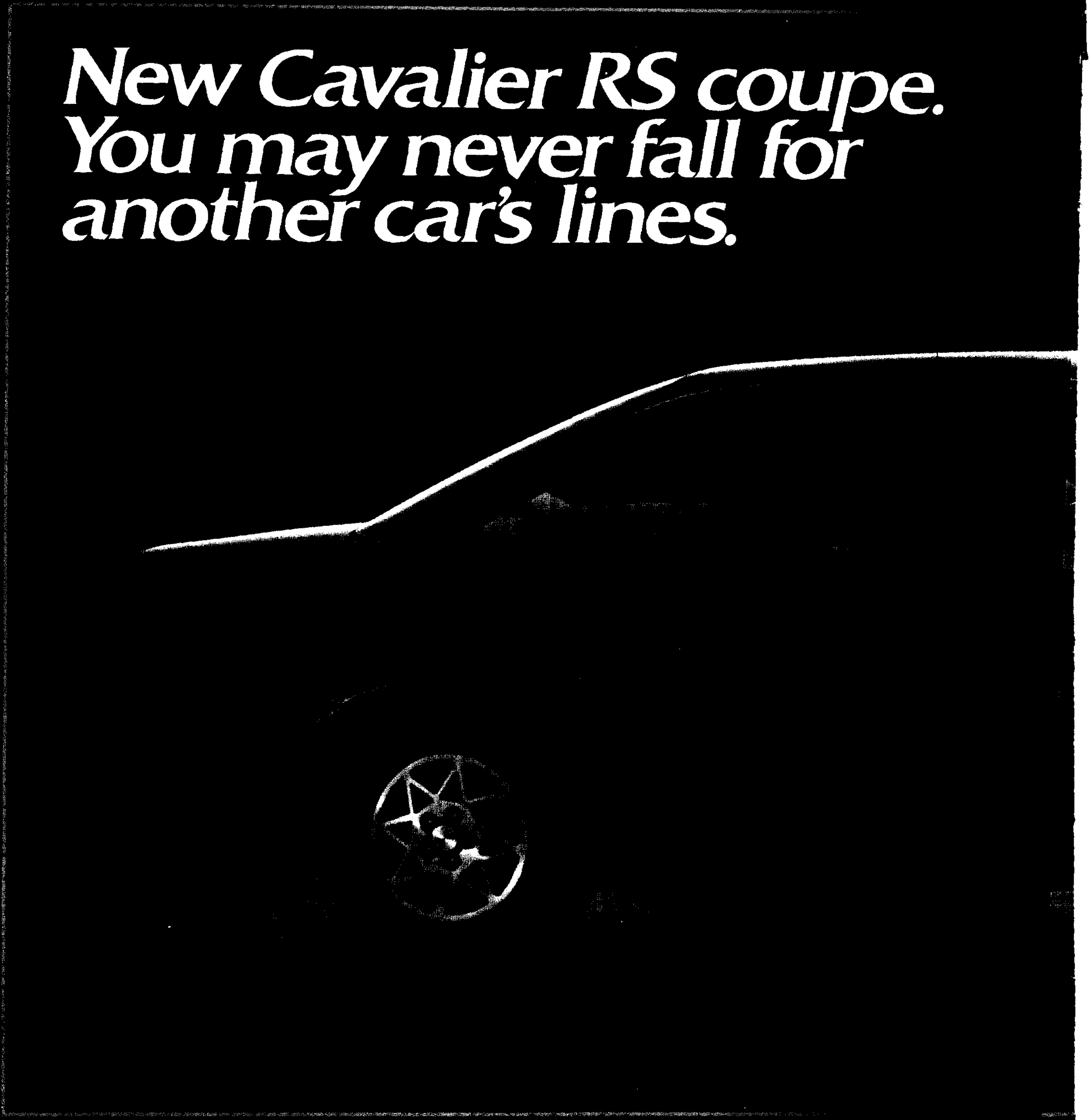

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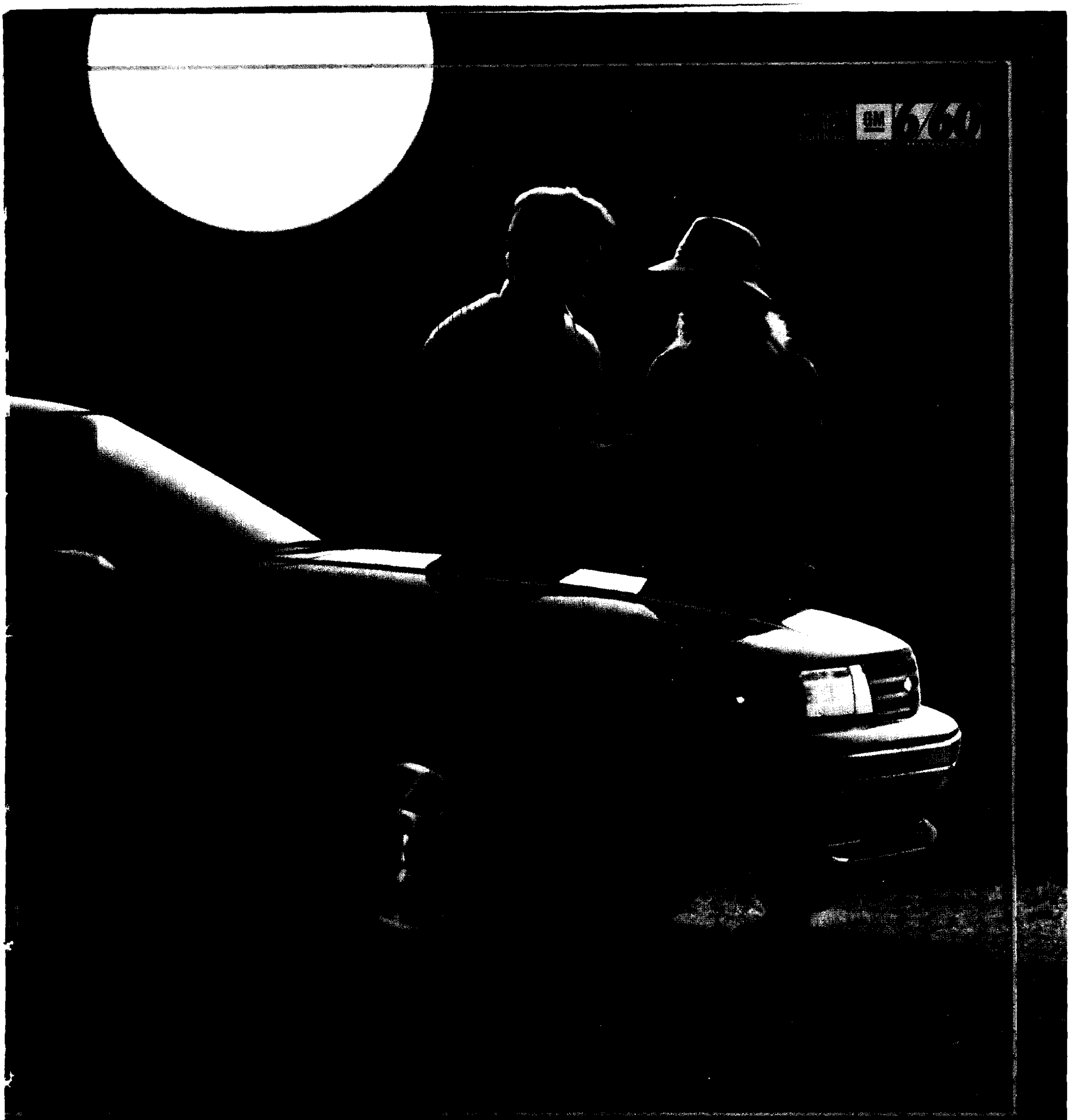

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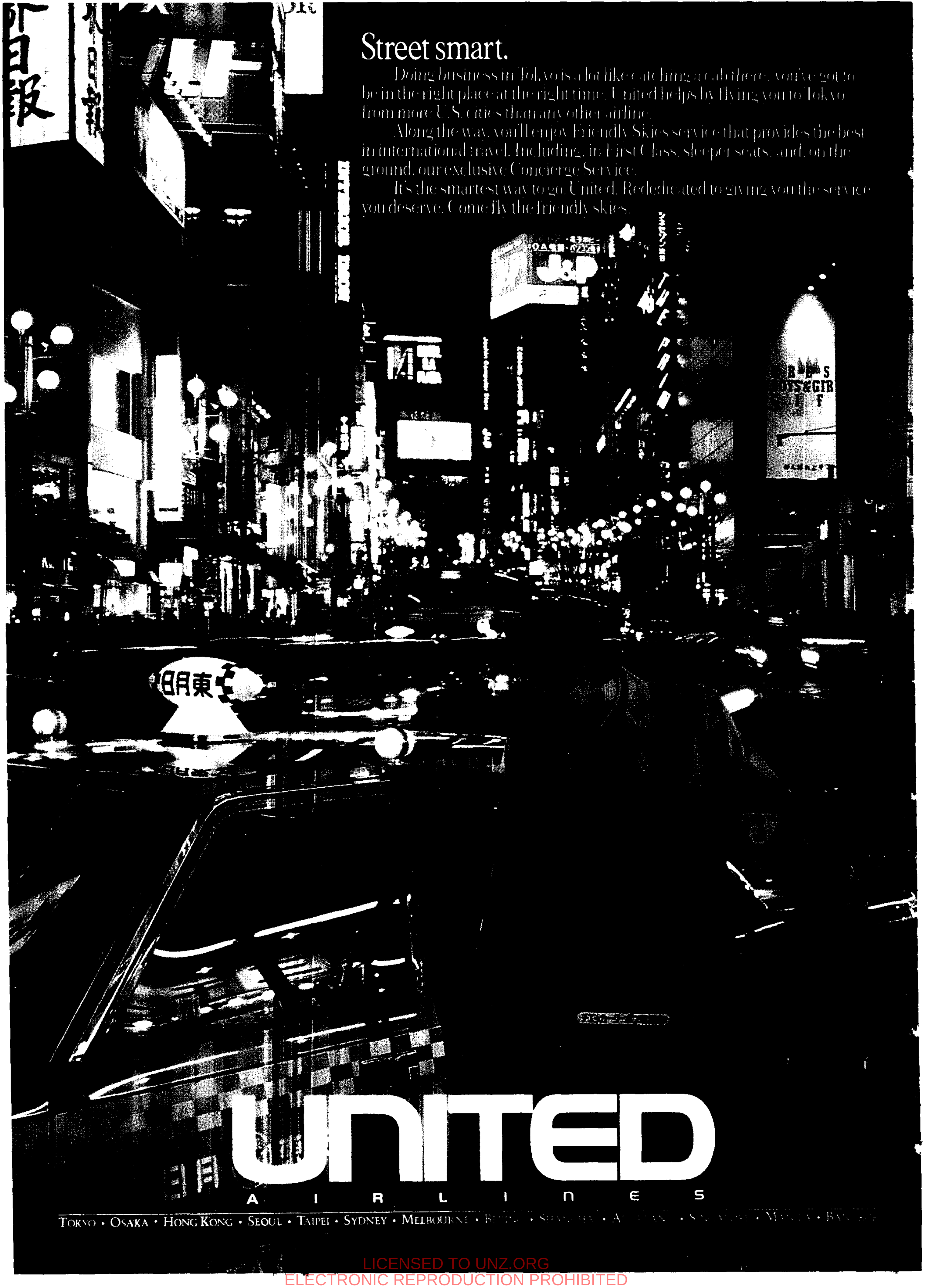

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